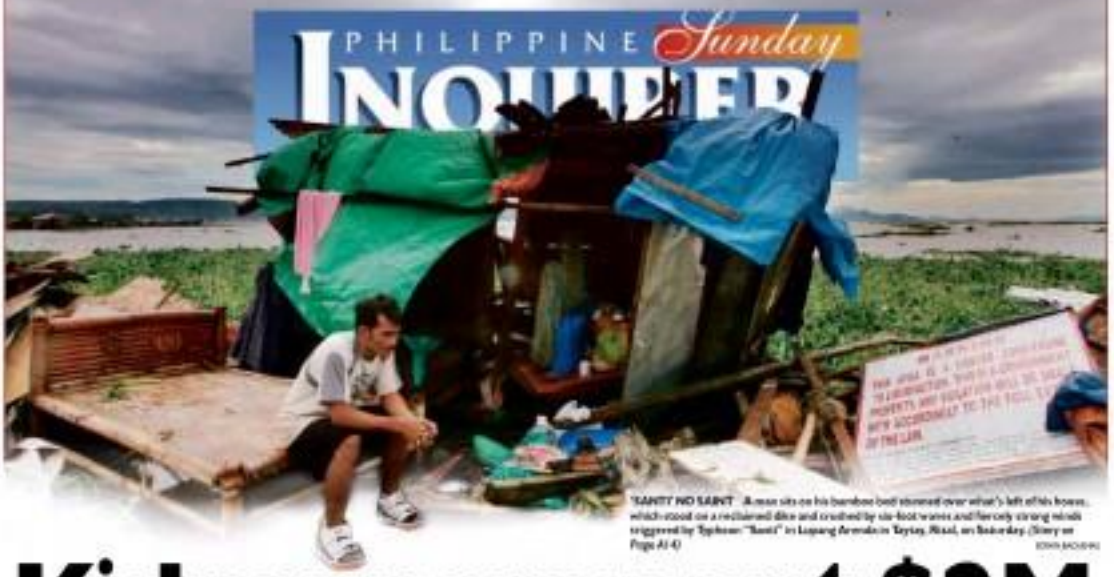
Sunday, November 1, 2009 ★★ Vol. 24 / No. 326

PHILIPPINE Sunday INQUIRER



'SANITY NO SAINT' A man sits on his bamboo bed stunned over what's left of his house, which stood on a reclaimed dike and crushed by six-foot waves and fierce strong winds triggered by Typhoon "Santi" in Laguna Avenue in Tayuman, Rizal, on Saturday. (Story on Page A1-4) JOHN ANDAYA

Kidnappers want $2M

Fast, furious 'Santi' hits Metro, S. Luzon; 11 dead

By Alexis Papa, Marlon Ramos and Inquirer Southern Luzon

WITH TYPHOON "SANTI" making its way out of the Philippines, there will be a spot of good weather for the faithful to troop to cemeteries for the traditional All Saints' Day commemoration today.

Santi's making landfall coincided with the rush of vacationers who wanted to take advantage of the long All Saints' Day holiday.

Nathaniel Cruz, deputy director of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), made this welcome declaration at a press briefing yesterday morning, after Santi (international name: Mirinae) pummeled Metro Manila and southern Luzon provinces, bringing powerful winds that toppled electric posts and trees that triggered flash floods and landslides.

"The war is over. The part of Santi in our lives is finished," Cruz said.

Later yesterday, Cruz said Santi had weakened into a tropical storm as it continued to move away.

He said it was expected to leave the Philippine area of responsibility at around 2 p.m. today and to be 670 kilometers west northwest of Metro Manila by tomorrow afternoon.

PART A14

PROOF OF LIFE This video grab taken somewhere in Lanao del Norte on Oct. 24, 2009, and released Oct. 31 shows kidnapped Irish priest Fr. Michael Sinnott with an Oct. 22 copy of the Inquirer, which served as proof of life. AFP

Irish priest shown alive on video

By Ryan D. Rosauro and Jaime Aliposa
Inquirer Mindanao

PAGADIAN CITY—KIDNAPpers holding Fr. Michael Sinnott have released a video of their captive in which the elderly Irish priest says $2 million must be paid for his release.

The video, a copy of which was received by the crisis management committee here yesterday, showed Sinnott, 79, standing behind a copy of the Oct. 22 issue of the Inquirer, which served as proof of life, said Allen Mobile, spokesperson of the provincial government's committee handling the Sinnott abduction.

"My kidnappers are led by commander Abu Sayyaf. They are asking $2 million as ransom money," the priest said while standing in front of a white background in a forested area.

"We are living in the open, in difficult circumstances. I am still in good health even if I do not have the full

KIDNAPPING A6

RP team wins 25 medals in math contest in India

By Jerry E. Esplanada

NEW DELHI—IT WAS ÄAPIN schil ôuz, or "mission accomplished" in Hindi, for the 20-member Philippine team to the just-concluded 2009 Wizards of Mathematics International Competition (Wizmic) in India.

The young Filipino math wizards won a total of 25 medals in the Ninth contest for elementary students held in Lucknow, the capital of the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, about 916 kilometers southeast of the Indian capital.

The four gold, 11 silver and 10 bronze medals that the Filipino team won gave it a very respectable several-place finish in the seven-nation contest.

Indonesia topped the contest, winning the most gold, 8, and taking a total of 24 medals. Thailand came in third with 20, Bulgaria was fourth with 9, while host India was fifth with 10 medals, mostly bronze.

Zimbabwe and Nepal also took part in the contest, taking home six and five medals, respectively.

The Philippines' individual gold medals were won by Adri-

NP TEAM A10

If Rizal were alive, he'd visit his old Jesuit mentors here

By Volt Contreras

IF THE NATIONAL HERO JOSE RIZAL WERE alive today he would probably drop in and light a candle here on the "day of the dead" to homage to his teachers.

In these condominium-style tombs set around a quadrangle no bigger than a basketball court lie some of the revered educators, scholars, writers, artists and scientists who guided Filipinos on that rare path where spiritual growth and intellectual pursuits meet.

The country's main Jesuit cemetery, the final resting place for many members of the Society of Jesus serving in the Philippines, is located in a two-storeyed compound of the Sacred Heart Novitiate in Novaliches, Quezon City.

IF RIZAL A6

New politics by 'irritation,' according to Perlas

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

A NUMBER OF PRESIDENTIAL ASPIrants with a mind-set on reforms and new politics are now backing Liberal Party standard-bearer Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III—but Nicanor Perlas is not one of them.

His campaign slogan, composed by his supporters, is a play on his surname: "Perlas Tayong Lahat (We are all pearls)."

"Perlas" is the Filipino word for "pearl," which is formed when a shell gets irritated, the man observed. Thus, his slogan represents "the millions of Filipinos getting irritated" by current problems.

NEW POLITICS A11

Six Pampanga mayors clamor for GMA in House

By Charlene Cayubyab
Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—IF the mayors of Pampanga's second district had their way, they would want to see President Macapagal-Arroyo in Congress in 2010.

The mayors' statements came after Dyan urging Ms Arroyo to

JEX PAMPANGA A13

Because of a shoe, province was won by Grace

By Fe Zamora

FOR OVER THREE DECADES, ISABELA Gov. Grace Padaca had worn shoes bought from the children's section of department stores. Then in 2008, she met orthopedic shoemaker Gerard van Riel of Gouvdijk in the Netherlands.

Like teacher Anne Sullivan who "showed" the blind Helen Keller the wonders of reading in Braille, Van Riel introduced polio-stricken Padaca to the joys of "walking" with orthoshoes.

"He liberated me from a life doomed to sitting and waiting for my cousin who was my human crutch," Padaca, 2008 Ramon Magsaysay laureate for government service, said in an interview in Manila. "Without the shoes that Gerard made, it would have been impossible for me to become an active public servant."

Showing off her shoes, a thick wedge-fused leather and metal contraption, exclu-

BECAUSE A13

WHAT'S INSIDE

• **Comelec:** No extension for voter registration • Flood turns cemetery into tourist spot • Nothing but sad memories for Barangay Silangan residents /NEWS • **How** to make a boat for flooded streets /TALK OF THE TOWN • **Judge** orders 3 to stand trial for death of Playboy model Anna Nicole Smith /WORLD • **13** ghost-hunting tips • RP's ghost capital; 19 scariest places in Baguio City • Ghostbusters communicate with sad spirits to help them cross over to the light • 8 tips on collecting art for profit /SUNDAY INQUIRER MAGAZINE • **Building** a dream school /JUNIOR INQUIRER • **Wakes** now a style statement • How dead man helps his wife reconcile with in-laws • Designer of to-die-for coffins /SUNDAY INQUIRER LIFESTYLE

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

MOTHER AND CHILD brave the strong wind and rain brought by Typhoon "Santi" as they leave their home at Lupang Arenda, Tarlac, Wed. Thousands were displaced by the latest storm to hit the country. (

No way: Loren slams door on Chiz

By Michael Lim Ubac

HE HAD NOT BOTH-ered to call her.

Sen. Loren Legarda, asked if there was a chance the team-up between her and Sen. Francis "Chiz" Escudero in 2010 might still push through, indicated the possibility was practically nil.

"Will it be logical for me to continue to run with him when he left me and the NPC Diaries-slist People's Coalition] without informing us and has not communicated with me up to this time," Legarda said.

Legarda said she last talked to Escudero about two weeks ago, and up until the last minute he...

...but he announced his decision on...

...Oct. 23, Legarda had gone ahead and announced her bid for the vice presidency with-out Escudero's presence at her Lawton rally. She himself openly...

...Escudero abruptly announced he was leaving the NPC. "It's the presidency but not at all costs," Escudero had said, adding: "If on your way there you will be eaten up by the up-turn, then what for? You can't do-valuer service or be done anyway."

Legarda said Escudero, a gift-ed public speaker and lawyer, should know by now the implications of his actions.

The NPC is led by boatmen-ty-coon Edgardo "Dandog" Co-juangco, once a crony of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos and one of the richest men in the country.

"I expect him to know the ram-ifications of his actions," said Legarda, echoing reports swirl-ing the NPC that Escudero would be running up with Sen. Panfilo Lacson, a former military officer.

"I have not heard from Sena-tor Chiz from the time that he left the party, so I don't know about his official plans. As I've said, I respect his decision and I wish him well," Legarda said.

As for speculation the NPC would still support Escudero's presidential bid, Legarda and party leaders were "still in the process of consultations."

"At the proper time our politi-cal alliances [that would be] based on my platform will be re-vealed," she said.

She refused to say if she had given her nod to Sen. Manuel Villar Jr., the standard-bearer of the Nacionalista Party, who has not announced a running mate.

Until Wednesday, Legarda said she had no talking relation-ship with Escudero, then the presumptive standard-bearer of the NPC, would lead the party, leaving her without a presidential running mate.

In a phone interview yester-day, NPC spokesperson Rep. Ben Gaerlan denied he had said the NPC would support Escudero even after he left the party.

Gaerlan-dan said that "to set things straight" he did not utter "confusion" that was attributed to him.

He was quoted as saying: "His departure, while shocking, does not mean an end to his ties with our members. ... Anything is pos-sible including the NPC eventual-ly supporting him as president."

"How can I say that when right now, we're still counting our members? I do not wish to prompt the consolidation pro-cess," he said.

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Danding son: Chiz's radical positions caused split with NPC

By Carlo F. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—NAWAGALEMBO natural consequences.

That, according to Rep. Mark Co-juangco, was the main cause of the friction between the Nationalist Peo-ple's Coalition (NPC) and its erstwhile presidential aspirant, Sen. Francis "Chiz" Escudero, who bolted the party.

Cojuangco, son of fraternal cronies Edwardo "Dandog" Cojuangco Jr., said in an interview here on Thurs-day that Escudero took a radical posi-tion on some key issues in which the NPC preferred a conservative stand.

Two of the issues were the legis-lated P125 wage increase and the proposal to condone billions of pe-sos in debts owned by farmers un-der the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

The young Cojuangco said Es-cudero was treated "fairly and squarely" in the NPC but he wanted the party to decide more quickly on certain matters.

In particular, Cojuangco said Es-cudero strongly supported a legis-lated P125 wage increase while the NPC was concerned it might cause the collapse of businesses.

Dandog Cojuangco, who founded the NPC when he ran for president in 1992, chairs the giant conglomerate San Miguel Corp., one of the biggest employers in the country.

In a statement, Escudero said the government had failed to protect the rights and welfare of workers.

"The Philippine Constitution rec-ognizes the importance of labor and mandates that the state shall pro-tect workers' rights and promote their welfare. But the sad reality is that workers do not receive their fair share," he said.

The present minimum wage varies per region, but Escudero said the minimum demonstrates that all regional levels fall far short of a liv-ing wage.

Mark Cojuangco also said while Escudero strongly pushed for mea-sures to condone farmers' debts un-der CARP, the NPC wouldn't want to take a stand on this until an inven-tory of the debts had been taken.

Farmers who benefited from CARP received land from the gov-ernment which they paid for in fixed amortizations in addition to the Land Bank of the Philippines.

But CARP has a provision that al-lowed landowners, who didn't want to dump up their estates, to avail them-selves of the stock distribution option.

Instead of distributing land, landowners issued certificates of stock to farmer-tenants, the lat-ter pay for the stocks in regular month-ly amortization schedules.

Dandog Cojuangco is one of sev-eral landowners who had availed themselves of the stock option pro-gram. The Cojuangco family founds of the late President Corazon Aquino had also availed itself of the stock dis-tribution program for its vast Hacien-da Luisita estate in Tarlac.

Mark Cojuangco said Escudero's departure from the NPC forced the party to return to the drawing board, although its officials would definitely field Sen. Loren Legarda as its vice presidential candidate.

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Militants applaud Escudero

MANILA, Philippines—Militant Bayan-ihan group for having broken off from the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC) headed by senator Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

KMU leader Elmer Labog lauded Escudero's announcement for being "proactive."

"In the context of the ...

...ing the ...

...Escudero, he said, had been against labor "contractualization" and the Oil Deregulation Law and was also a staunch critic of the Arroyo administration, Gen. Kristine L. Alave

Comelec: No listup extension save for those in line

By Kristine L. Alave

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS (Comelec) said it would not entertain the deadline for the registration of those who were in line but could not be accommodated due to the blackouts that hit Luzon yesterday.

Comelec Chair Jose Melo said his had received reports that local election offices in Metro Manila and southern Luzon* were unable to process the registration applications of eligible voters because of the power outages caused by Typhoon "Santi."

In consideration of the applicants who had lined up yesterday to register despite the typhoon, Melo said the Comelec en banc had directed local election officers to collect the registrants' forms and list down their names.

The applicants can then come back on Tuesday to have their registration data encoded on the data capturing machines.

But Melo ruled out any extension of the Oct. 31 deadline.

Several groups have been seeking an extension of the voter registration deadline.

"Those who were listed are the ones who can apply on Tuesday. If they don't appear, then they won't be able to register," Melo said.

"No more special registration," he added.

Comelec spokesperson James Jimenez said applicants should make sure their forms have the stamp of the election officer, a sign that they were in line on Saturday.

Otherwise, they would not be entertained on Tuesday, he said.

In other regions not affected by Santi, the registration ended on Saturday at midnight, Melo said.

The last week of registration saw local election offices swamped with last-minute registrants who want to participate in the May 2010 national elections.

To accommodate more applicants, the Comelec extended the office hours of local election officers and ordered them to work on weekends.

As of July, the Comelec said it had removed about five million dead voters and multiple registrants and added nearly 3 million voters to the list.

The Comelec said it expected 59 million registered voters at the end of the registration period.

As Baguio City rehearsed employees of the Comelec reported an increase of people lining up to register Saturday, the last day of registration for nine years.

A few of the people told the bureaucrats that they were sent there by their barangay captains.

But the Comelec employees just smiled, apologized to the crowd of villagers and then turned them away.

"We're looking forward to shopping on All Saints' Day," said lawyer Modesto Balisi, Baguio election officer.

The seven employees manning the makeshift registration area at the Baguio Convention Center had been struggling through the days with only five hours of sleep, Balisi said. With a report from Honard Gabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

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Move to China better, says Smartmatic

The CONSORTIUM WHICH WON THE bid to supply the vote counting machines for the May 2010 elections said the transfer of the machines' production site from Taiwan to China would ensure their early completion and delivery.

Smartmatic International Corp. and Total Information Management Technology Inc. said the Shanghai-based factory which would manufacture the precinct count optical scan (PCOS) machines is located nearer the supply of raw materials.

Cesar Flores, Smartmatic Asia Pacific president, said almost all of the more than 100 components needed to produce the PCOS machines were being imported from China.

With manufacturing now transferred in Shanghai, he said it would be easier for the contractors to ensure that the machines would be completed at the soonest possible time.

The transfer, approved by the Commission on Elections' Project Management Office, would not cause any delays in the delivery of the machines, Flores said.

"After (Tropical Storm) Ketsana hit Taiwan, we assured getting concerned. A lot of its road networks were closed for quite some time, and that could cause delays if it happens again," Flores explained.

"We chose the Shanghai facility because it's even bigger than the one in Taiwan. Also, majority of the suppliers of the components are in China, so we're closer to the supply chain than we were before."

"We've started conditioning the assembly lines to start production. We will start deliveries in December and will finish by January. All of the more than 80,000 machines will be here by then," he said. Abigail L. Mo

Holidays in ARMM only, says Palace

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO HAS DECLARED the non-day celebrations of Eid'l Adha later this month as holidays only in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

Eid'l Adha, also known as the Feast of Sacrifice or Day of Sacrifice, is observed after the hajj, the annual pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia.

The Office of the Press Secretary announced on its website yesterday that Ms. Arroyo issued Proclamation No. 1806-A declaring Nov. 27 and Nov. 28 regular holidays only in the ARMM and not the entire country.

That new proclamation amends Proclamation No. 1808, which declared the two dates as national holidays in observance of Eid'l Adha and which was issued on April 13 this year.

"The reason being is that when we first announced it to be a holiday, we heard not a little later that there's a republic act that declared this holiday only in the ARMM. We had to correct it," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said in a phone interview.

He was referring to Republic Act No. 9492 which provides for the celebration of Eid'l Adha as a regional holiday in the ARMM.

Parliamentarians Senate Twice complaining about the many holidays every year, saying that an excess would adversely impact on productivity across all sectors.

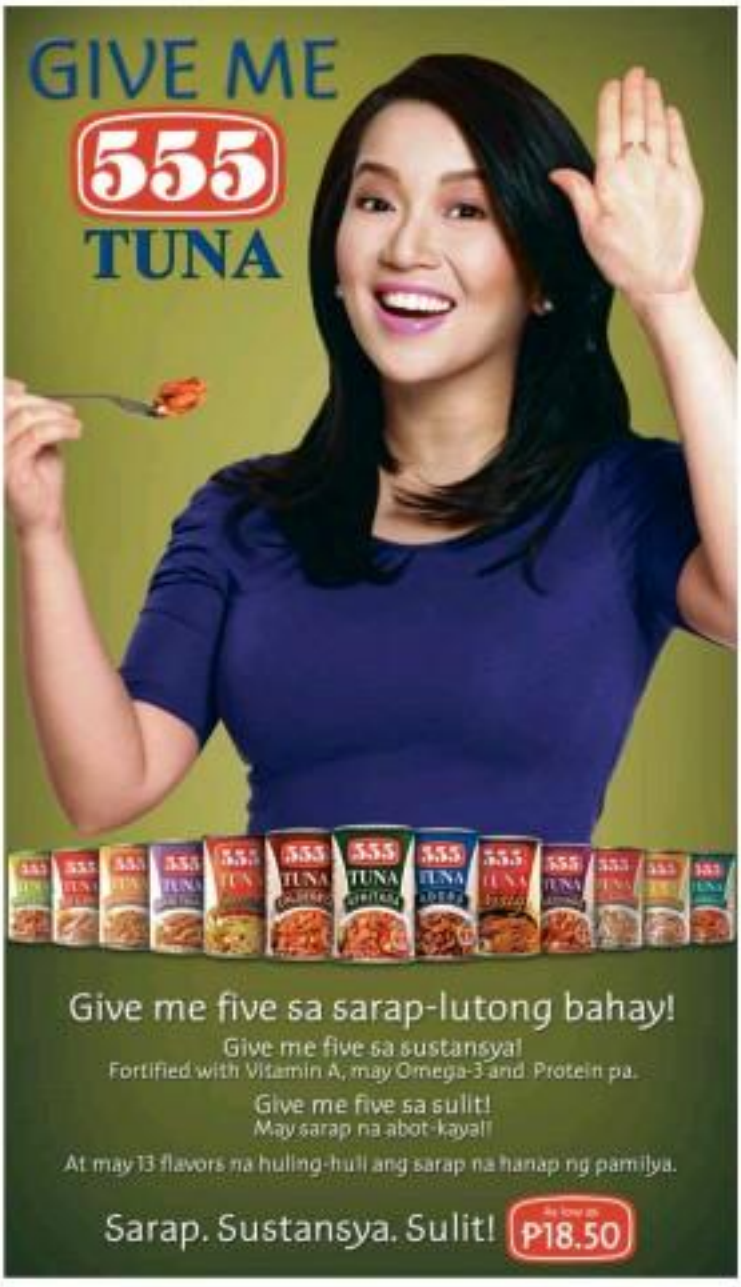
"Not necessarily," Ermita said when asked if the amendment was prompted by pressure from the business community.

But he admitted that Malacañang always consulted with the Department of Trade and Industry and Department of Labor and Employment before issuing holiday proclamations in order to get a reading of the concerns of the community.

"You might say we just want to be sure we don't want to adversely affect the concerns of the business community," he said.

Had Malacañang stuck to the original proclamation of making Nov. 27 and 28, a Friday and a Saturday, national holidays, the public would be seeing one of the longest weekends this year, because the following Monday, Nov. 30, is Bonifacio Day, a regular non-working holiday.

The issued the first time Malacañang amended a proclamation on holidays. TJ Burgonio



NYK-TDG MARITIME ACADEMY

NYK-TDG MARITIME ACADEMY RELEASES RESULTS OF ENTRANCE EXAMINATION

Japan gives RP ₱1.7B for new weather radar

By Kristine L. Alave

THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT HAS GIVEN ₱1.7 billion (3,350 billion yen) grant to the Philippines to improve its weather monitoring and information dissemination system in the aftermath of several deadly storms that killed hundreds in Metro Manila and northern Luzon and wrought billions of pesos in damage.

Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo and Japanese Ambassador Makoto Katsura on Friday signed and exchanged notes on the Project for Improvement of the Meteorological Radar System, which provides for the grant.

Under the project, to be implemented by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), the country's three existing meteorological radar systems in Aparri, Tagaytay Tiwa, Casamboangan, and Subic, Zambales, would be replaced with new Doppler (S-band) radar systems, the Department of Foreign Affairs said.

Doppler radar gives a more accurate reading of weather systems.

By upgrading the Philippines' weather monitoring system, the Japanese government said it hoped to mitigate the damage wrought by tropical cyclones on the lives and properties of Filipinos.

"We hope that these projects will assist the victims of these calamities, and support and strengthen the disaster mitigation efforts of the Philippine government. As a close friend and neighbor, Japan will continuously support typhoon victims in reconstruct and improve the living environment in the Philippines," Katsura said.

Tropical Storms "Ondoy" and "Pepeng," which struck in September and October, ravaged the island of Luzon. The rains brought by Ondoy led to the worst flooding in Metro Manila and surrounding provinces in recent memory.

Pepeng, on the other hand, dumped heavy rains on Central and northern Luzon, resulting in killer landslides and floods.

GMA orders lake towns protected

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO YESterday ordered Public Works Secretary Victor Domingo to start sandbagging localities around Laguna de Bay that were flooded as Typhoon "Santi" barreled through southern Luzon.

Ms Arroyo issued the order as she monitored aboard the eastern gate of Metro Manila yesterday checking on residents in danger zones in the aftermath of the typhoon.

"She gave instructions to Vic Domingo to immediately start sandbagging around Laguna lake, specifically Sta. Cruz and low-lying areas that were flooded," Press Secretary Cerge Remonde told reporters in Tagalog.

On her last stop, the President stopped onto a bridge in Sapinidan, Tagaig, to get a better view of Laguna de Bay and she saw for herself the squatter settlements in Lupang Arenda on the islandsmen.

"She ordered the local authorities to stop the residents from going back to the danger zones," Remonde said. "She saw many of our that are really off-limits structures."

Ms Arroyo first stationed in the Muoggao Floodway in Pasig City and appointed pleased to learn that the waterways leading to Laguna lake did not swell overnight.

"I'm glad you're OK," she told Muoggao barangay chair Bobby Bobis.

The presidential convoy then proceeded to Sapinidan, where Ms Arroyo climbed atop a dike to check on the spillway which swelled Saturday morning due to the rain but later subsided. The spillway flows into the lake.

From there, the convoy drove to higher ground in Sapinidan for a better view of Laguna de Bay Ms Arroyo briefly chatted with residents, telling them how happy she was they seemed to be in less danger than when storms "Ondoy" and "Pepeng" struck.

Ms Arroyo also ordered Vice President Noli de Castro to prioritize the relocation of families displaced by heavy flooding, according to Remonde. TJ Burgonio

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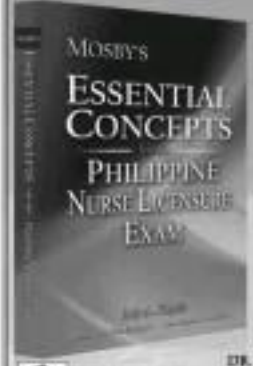

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Dr. Ray A. Gapuz, a Filipino nurse, holds a Doctorate Degree in Science (honoris causa) and a doctorate degree in Entrepreneurial Management (honoris causa). He graduated Summa Cum Laude from the University of Sto. Tomas for his Master's Degree in Nursing. He finished his Bachelor's Degree in Nursing in the same university, Cum Laude in 1993. He was a Board Topnotcher in the 1992 Nurse Licensure Exam where he obtained a rating of 89.20.

He is a recipient of the Entrepreneur 10 Award in 2004 from Entrepreneur Magazine, Agora Award (2005) from the Philippine Marketing Association, Manunlit and Huwarn Young Market Masters Award (2006). He is also included in the book "50 Inspiring Entrepreneurial Stories" by GOBSCORP (2007). In 2008, he was enlisted with 88 Icons and the world's 1.0 million achievers in the silver edition of Marquis Who's Who in the World. He is also an Ernst and Young Entrepreneur of the Year Awardee.

Ray is the only son of Rizal-ist Ilocano Gapuz whose family hails from Baguio and La Union and the late-ex Evangelina Gonzales Agno of Rabat City.

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DepEd mulls new sites, textbooks for damaged schools

By Erlinn C. Tandoc Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (DepED) is planning to relocate schools located in disaster-prone areas that suffered about P2 billion worth of damage in the aftermath of Tropical Storms "Ondoy" and "Pepeng."

In a press conference Friday, Education Undersecretary Ramon Bacani said the DepEd had started identifying the public schools located in geohazard-prone areas.

"Those [schools] are being identified and relocation will be planned if there is a need to relocate them to safer ground," he said.

Bacani cited public schools in Baguio City, saying many of them were located in areas prone to landslides.

He said the teachers, parents and students in schools identified as being at risk would be consulted.

11 million books damaged

The DepEd is also considering an emergency purchase of textbooks to replace those damaged by the floods.

Ondoy and Pepeng damaged more than 11 million textbooks in six regions worth more than P739 million, the DepEd said in a report.

The International Materials Council Secretariat (IMCS) maintains open copies, but the 467,478 copies stored in the office are insufficient to replace all the textbooks lost to the floods, IMCS director Ramon Pilar said.

As the schools in flood-prone areas, [illegible] until flood control projects ... are relocated—was the answer.

He cited public schools in the cities of Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela which used to be flooded during high tide even with no rains.

Bacani said schools were not heavily flooded during Ondoy, thanks to the flood control projects in the area.

Quick response budget

Learning from its experiences with Ondoy and Pepeng, DepEd is planning to ask for a P1-billion quick response budget for next year. This year, it was only allocated P680 million for quick response, Bacani said.

The DepEd has allocated for building repairs at least P115 million, the amount remaining of its P686-million quick response fund for this year.

Thus, it is asking private groups to join its adopt-a-school program, a project the Philippine Daily Inquirer has participated in, Bacani said.

Bacani said the replacement of textbooks started in Marikina City last week. Deliveries are ongoing in Pasig City and Caloocan City.

Deliveries to other affected areas in the metropolis will be completed by Nov. 6, he said.

Donations and modules

Bacani admitted the student to textbook ratio would likely deteriorate, but Pilar said some book publishers had donated some textbooks while learning modules were being distributed in place of textbooks in the meantime.

Schools in Metro Manila lost some 2.66 million textbooks while schools in Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon lost 2.44 million books. Some 2.36 million textbooks were damaged in the Bicol region during Pepeng.

LIBRE Classifieds

AYALA MALLS WINS TWO GOLDS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF SHOPPING CENTERS' ANNUAL ASIA SHOPPING CENTERS AWARDS COMPETITION

The Ayala Malls won two gold awards in the recently concluded International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) Asia Shopping Center Awards Competition in Singapore.

The first gold award, for Design and Development , was given to Greenbelt 5 and the second gold award, for Marketing Excellence, was given to Ayala Center Cebu's Think Pink campaign. The awards were presented by Peter Sharpe, ICSC Chairman and Michael Kercheval, ICSC President to the Ayala Malls team led by Warren Allmanaro, SVP and Group Head of Ayala Malls Group , together with Rowena Tolentino, VP and CSD, Ayala Malls Group and Cathy Bengzon, Senior Division Manager and Head of Marketing, Ayala Malls Group.

The ICSC is the premier global trade association of the shopping center industry with over 60,000 members in over 90 countries. The ICSC Asia Shopping Center Awards recognizes and honors the shopping industry's most cutting edge properties, innovative solutions and creative responses to market trends, as well as outstanding examples of design and development throughout the Asia Pacific region.

Ayala Center Cebu (ACC) " Think Pink" campaign went beyond the traditional Pink October Breast Cancer Awareness campaign. ACC launched a celebration that highlighted the importance of wellness and a healthy lifestyle. The campaign aimed to promote a holistic lifestyle through good food, great fashion and healthy living. " Think Pink" was the theme that embodied the month-long celebration.

Greenbelt 5 is the latest piece of the Greenbelt redevelopment. It completes the mix of the complex with upscale fashion complementing exciting dining and entertainment offerings. The four-level center showcases the best of Filipino artistry and ingenuity alongside international brands and offers open spaces for public events amidst the lush oasis of the Greenbelt Park.

In winning the Gold Awards in the ICSC Asia Shopping Centers Awards Competition, Greenbelt 5 was recognized as a leader in design and innovation together with world-class developments such as Route 66 (Australia), Gyre (Japan), Central World

(Thailand) and Chadstone Fresh Food Precinct (Australia) . It also acknowledged Ayala Center Cebu's Think Pink campaign as one of the best retail marketing programs in the region.

Kidnappers want $2-M ransom for Irish priest

front page A1

medicines," he said.

Proof of life

It was the first time any proof had been made public that Sinnott, who meets coordinators for a better conditions, runs allow every gunmen seized him from his mission office in Pagadian on Oct. 11.

According to Biddle, the video was received while the OMC was having a special meeting presiding "has strong OMC members had seen it on TV before the images were received".

The video was broadcast on the GMA television network in Manila yesterday.

In the video, Sinnott appealed to President Macapagal-Arroyo and the Irish and Philippine governments.

"To President GMA, the Philippines and Irish governments, and my compatriots in the Society of St. Columban, and all other persons, (please) help us that I can get out of here as soon as possible," he said.

But Biddle said the provincial government of Zamboanga del Sur and the Columbian Fathers were moderating a no-ransom policy.

No-ransom policy

Fr. Patrick O'Donoghue, the Philippines head of the Missionary Society of Saint Columban, who saw photographs taken from the video, confirmed that it was Sinnott and expressed relief that he was looking relatively healthy.

However, he stressed that no money would be paid in return Sinnott's freedom.

"The Columban fathers do not pay ransom and we never have and I don't think we ever would," he said.

O'Donoghue said he had no previous knowledge of the video and that he immediately relayed the news to the OMC that is in charge of receiving Sinnott.

Ismael Ibrera spokesperson Lt. Col. Buenaventura said authorities would have to check if Ismael Gerebal or Jamalul is some respects belonged to the al Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf terror group.

"I don't know exactly from the video was acquired, but it's confirmed that there's a video showing fr. sinnott alive," he said in a phone interview, adding that he had not personally seen the video.

A military official who saw the video said the Catholic priest "looks weak."

He said the Armed Forces would wait for the recommendations of the crisis committee before ordering military action.

Rescue option

The separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front yesterday said a rescue operation to secure Sinnott from the hands of his abductors in Lanao del Norte remained the primary option.

But Eid Kabalu, the MILF vice-chairman, said the MILF was "open to the idea" of helping the OMC explore a window for possible negotiation with the kidnappers.

He said rebel leaders were studying the OMC's request while also preparing to launch a rescue mission.

Kabalu stressed that the MILF was "greatly inclined" to choose a rescue as the better option because getting into negotiations is like pampering (from SOMA)."

Kabalu said the MILF was worried that negotiating another option would only prolong Sinnott's captivity.

He explained that the MILF's own Task Force Ulamar was only mandated to launch search-and-rescue missions. Negotiators use a task that would require a new mandate from the rebel group's central command, he said.

High-powered firearms

Kabalu said the group holding Sinnott was "not small but equipped with high-powered firearms."

This was the reason why the MILF wanted to achieve "armed predominance" in the course of the planned rescues, he said.

But Kabalu said the MILF would heed the OMC's call for it to disarm the team that it has said not to rescue the ailing priest.

There have been conflicting reports of who is holding Sinnott. Some say military is saying he was kidnapped by a Muslim private active in the area lawless area.

However Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro has also said he believes Sinnott is being held by rogue elements of the MILF.

The MILF has repeatedly denied any involvement. An MILF spokesperson said MIF powers day he did not know of any Abu Jamal, and was not aware of the video. With Abu Ian Ramos in Metro Manila, AFP and AP

If Rizal were alive, he'd light a candle for old Jesuit mentors here

front page A1

The cemetery was built with the establishment of the institute in 1933. Jesuit communities in the provinces have similar burial grounds.

3 generations of Jesuits

The one at the novitiate is said to hold the remains of three "generations" of Jesuits—Spanish, American and Filipino members of the religious order founded by St. Ignatius Loyola in the 16th century—many of whom have left great legacies and have streets, parks and buildings named in their honor.

Yet their graves reflect none of that brilliance. No oversized crosses or statuary, or profound epitaphs. Not one gilded headstone or polished marble slab.

Each tomb simply states the dates of birth and death of the deceased—and also the day he entered the order. The inscriptions are either written with ordinary lime paint on the slabs' gloves, etched on the stone.

The numbered niches are stacked three- to four-levels high, around an empty lane. From the gate, one can see the entire square all at once, as one press attracting special attention.

Just outside the enclosure, running two sturdy chain guard and ask the stones beneath their overarching boughs.

"This is not a cool place but a place of love, hope and admiration," said renowned Jesuit theologian Fr. Catalino Arevalo, SJ.

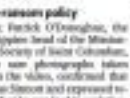
Great men

"It's not just because we know that these people had served the Lord and that they are now with him. And that someday we'll meet again," said Arevalo, 84, professor emeritus of the Loyola School of Theology at the Ateneo de Manila University.

Arevalo, who served as a spiritual adviser to the late President Corazon Aquino, said he must be old enough to have personally known "80 percent of those buried here. My whole Ateneo family is there."

According to a partial list prepared

SIMPLICITY Tomb of Fr. De la Costa, outstanding Ateneo of the 20th century



KNOWN TO GOD: The tomb of the 'Unknown Jesuits'

by Arevalo, the cemetery holds the remains of the following "great men":

■ Most Rev. Vicente Reverdy—Superior of the Cagayan-Bukidnon mission and vicar mission of Sacred Heart before World War II, he was instrumental in the Japanese at Fort Santiago during World War II. He later served in the Caroline and Marshall islands and returned to the Philippines "just to die here."

■ Fr. John Pollock—Beloved missionary priest in Mindanao who was made honorary citizen of Cotabato. In his later years, he was reputed to have heard confessions for 30 to 12 hours a day that long lines formed outside his room.

■ Fr. Eduardo Monterverde—Recognized "father of Filipino sacred songs and liturgical music" who composed some 400 hymns sung to this day.

■ Fr. George Willmann—Founder of the Knights of Columbus in the Philippines.

■ Fr. John Patrick Delaney—Renowned teacher who has a plaza and a hall named in his honor at the Ateneo and University of the Philippines.

WITHOUT TEARS Three generations of Jesuits in the Philippines are buried under the canopy of trees at the Sacred Heart Novitiate in Novaliches, Quezon City, described as "not a sad place because they are now with the Lord." JOAN LANDICHO

FR. AMEVALO: My whole Ateneo family is there. JOAN LANDICHO

bones of 37 Jesuits who died in Manila in the period before the turn-dating back to the 1800s. Both locate near the novitiate's "Unknown to mass for 'known to God'" (from the Latin, ignoti nonnisi deo noti).

According to Fr. Miguel Bernad, SJ, it may be a misnomer to call them tombs of "unknown" priests since the bones were originally from the Church of San Ignacio in Intramuros, where the dead Jesuits had their tombs.

When the church was destroyed and the bones were stored during the war, a "drastic decision" was made to put the bones together to bones without identification and rebury them in Novaliches, Bernad has written.

Among the bones, Bernad said, would be those of the following:

■ Fr. Jose Bernardino Carreon—Superior of the first group of Jesuits who returned to the Philippines in 1859, a century after the order was expelled from the islands by the Spanish king.

■ Fr. Jose Ignacio Guerrico—One of the founders of the Jesuit mission in what is now Cotabato, he spent long letters urging a more sympathetic attitude toward Muslims. He later served as confessor to the strident rebel Rizal was at the Ateneo. Rizal sculpted a bust of Guerrico during the former's exile in Dapitan.

■ Fr. Mateo Gobero—One of the pioneers in the Christianization of Davao and a member of the first expedition to reach the mouth of Mt. Apo, the country's highest peak.

■ Fr. Francisco de Paula Sanchez—Rizal's favorite teacher who encouraged his literary interests and molded his writing style.

Padre Faura

There is another famed Jesuit who died while serving in Manila but whose bones were not transferred to Novaliches. The house of Fr. Federico Faura, after whom the Intramuros street is named, was brought to be buried in his hometown in Spain.

Though not the founder of the Manila Observatory, Faura was the first to win international recognition for the facility, according to Bernad.

Simon and Rizal had a "mutual respect and admiration for each other." Bernad writes that it was Faura who prophetically said that Rizal would "life on the scaffold." The remark then was just his friendly way of warning Rizal to be careful.

There is purpose in having the cemetery within the novitiate, a secluded place where Jesuit novices spend their first two years to self-reflection and prayer.

Words to tomb

"It is here where some of us are formed and hope to some back when our work is done. There's this concept of 'words to tomb,' of going full circle, a romantic way of looking at our work," said Fov Alberto Encuna, a retired doctor who had his formation at Sacred Heart from 2000 to 2002.

"Here the novices can express their gratitude, remember their hopes, and talk to (the departed Jesuits) like living friends, for they really are still alive in God," said Arevalo.

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Palace rejects calls to lift oil price controls

By TJ Burgonio

MALACAÑANG HAS REJECTED the call made by the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) for the lifting of the oil price fuel prices and instead appealed for more understanding of the government's position.

Presidential Spokesperson Lorraine Badoy-Lucero said the MAP's contentions that Executive Order (EO) 839 issued by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo imposing a cap on the prices of petroleum products "wasn't good for the economy."

But he appealed to MAP to understand that the order was prompted by the declaration of a state of calamity in Luzon in the aftermath of Tropical Storms "Ondoy" and "Pepeng," and that this would "only be temporary."

"We appeal to the social responsibility of our friends in the business community to understand that this order was not issued to put them out of business," Bernardo said at a briefing.

MAP had urged Malacañang to discard the EO, warning that it would "thwart supply pressures."

Even the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has warned against the imposition of any form of price control, saying that it would create market distortions and discourage oil suppliers to the long run.

The Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) had also raised its reservations.

Long-term supply contracts

The influential business group urged the government to employ the order "judiciously, sparingly and in a well-calibrated manner, and not a day longer."

At the same time, Bernardo scoffed at threats by the oil companies not to import fuel.

"We all know that these oil companies have rationed into long-term supply contracts. And they can't scrap those just because they disagree with the cap on oil prices," he said, reasoning that if they made good on their threat it would result in the complete shutdown of their operations.

"I think the government is going to act with equal determination as it is doing now in order to protect the interest of the greater number of people," he said.

'Firms should open books'

Bloomberg said it was not buying the arguments of the oil firms that they stood to lose money if the price ceiling on oil prices was not lifted soon.

Gary Olivar, deputy presidential spokesperson, said EO 839 should not be used instead of compulsion to open their records to audit, if only to prove their claim that the government order was hurt for their business.

Olivar said the oil firms should not "hide behind the protection of deregulation as provided for by the law and let the true facts [of] such public sympathy."

"You do have to play your part. Be transparent. Be open. Most of all, be compliant with what the government requires if it is to ascertain the power of government in this," he said.

Oil firms have reluctantly followed President Arroyo's order to bring their prices down to P51.35 a liter. They warned of a supply shortage because they would not logically import oil then sell it at a lower price.

"We don't take that against them, but we would remind them that if they complain about profitability issues, they should have agreed before to open their financial statements and books to prospective audits," Ong Chua said.

With a report from Christine U. Figueroa

Magdalo decry Comelec rejection of their party

By Kristine L. Alave

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS' rejection of the application by party accreditation by a group of military mutineers was "unfair and heartless," according to Ashley Acedillo, a former Air Force lieutenant and the group's spokesperson.

The Comelec resolution saying that the Magdalo Para sa Pagbabago, a party founded by military men who staged their failed July 2003 Oakwood coup, could advocate the overthrow of the government "was not based on evidence but on pure conjectures and presumptions," according to Acedillo.

He said the Comelec had judged the Magdalo members unfairly and they would take the poll body to review its ruling.

Best interests of RP

"It is in the best interest of the country for the Comelec to encourage the Magdalo group to join the mainstream of Philippine society and allow it to participate in the democratic process, especially in elections, by approving its application for accreditation as a political party instead of resorting to and possibly go on to the Filipino by issuing our position," the Magdalo said in a statement.

The Comelec's 2nd Division expressed its distrust of the organization and said it has to put its "heart full."

The commissioners noted that the Magdalo leaders remained "unrepentant" over the 2003 coup attempt, and that they could "indoctrinate" their followers in withholding disclosure what undermines civilian society.

On July 27, 2003, about 300 junior military officers and enlisted personnel took over the Oakwood Premier Hotel in Makati City, decrying government corruption and demanding the resignations of President Macapagal-Arroyo and other government officials.

Leaders still in jail

About half of the participants in the failed uprising have been released, but the main leaders, including former Navy lieutenant Antonio Trillanes IV, remain incarcerated. Trillanes managed to get elected to the Senate from jail in 2007.

Although the group's application as a regional party was not approved, Acedillo said some of its members would still run for elective posts in 2010.

Acedillo, who wants to run for Congress in Cebu, said the Magdalo candidates might ally themselves with a major party or run as independents.

Two judicial bar topnotchers of Senator Antonio Trillanes IV and Rep. Liza Maza, who are on trial for alleged involvement in the failed coup attempts of February 2005 and November 2006, are seeking Senate posts.

Travel exchange set at Clark

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of Independent Travel Agencies (Natas), which has 17 provincial and city chapters nationwide, will hold the first Travel Market Exchange (Tenex) in Clark, Pampanga on Nov. 6.

Dubbed Tenex North Philippines Edition 2009, Natas chair emeritus Robert Lim Joseph said the one-day event was aimed at highlighting the importance of northern Philippines and the Subic, Clark and Ilocos corridor in expanding the travel and tourism industry through an organized buying and selling activity.

Joseph spoke during the launch of "Natas Lakbay Tenex Rebel Drive" and the inclusion of officers of the Pampanga chapter of Natas.

"We anticipate 400 buyers and officers, 20 of them from Singapore and Malaysia. This event will bring sellers and buyers together as potential business partners," said Joseph.

The Tenex would include seminars on Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions, Product Development, and Tour Destinations Marketing, among others, he said.

"Choosing Clark as the venue for Tenex is but fitting since it's a year-and-a-half home-base from Manila. It's international airport is convertible to inbound and outbound travellers, and there are numerous hotels and shops, and to mention historical and cultural sites," according to Natas chair Angel Samen Reyes.

At the launch were Clark International Airport Corp. (CIAC) president and CEO Victor Lanticse, Metro Angeles Chamber of Commerce and Hotel and Restaurant Association of Pampanga president Mayor Sapnoncocco, Clark Freeport Tourism Association president Philip Stribling, Manila Hotel of the Angeles City Tourism Officer.

Also senior tourism operations officer Edeliber Angeles-Sedaos, Natas Bataan chapter president Evangeline Bautista, Natas Olongapo head Olongapo head, Zambales Provincial Tourism Officer Cherilyn Office manager Noemi Loreta, and Greater Clark Visitor Bureau president Ayo Gray.

Tenex has the support of the Department of Tourism, Philippine Tourism Authority, Clark Development Corporation, Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, CIAC, Pagcor and Holiday Inn Clark.

More information may be obtained from Natas at the Bataan secretariat at tel. 5246875 or 5246788 or e-mail natas_pinoydotnet@yahoo.com.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Sunday, November 1, 2009
All Saints' Day

1st Reading: Rev 7:2-4, 9-14

I saw another angel ascending from the eastern, carrying the seal of the living God, and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels empowered to harm the earth and the sea, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the earth until we have sealed the servants of our God upon their foreheads."

After this I saw a great crowd, from every nation, from all peoples and tribes and tongues, standing before the throne and the Lamb, and they cried out with a loud voice, "Wise come unto our God who sits on the throne and the Lamb!"

All the angels were standing around the throne, the elders and the four living creatures, they threw themselves before the throne with their faces to the ground to worship God. They said, Amen. Praise, glory, wisdom, thanks, honor, power and strength to our God forever and ever. Amen!

At that moment, one of the elders spoke up and said to me, "Who are these people clothed in robes, and where did they come from?" I answered, "Sir, it is you who know this."

Then he explained, "These are those who have come out of the great persecution; they have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb.

2nd Reading: 1 Jn 3:1-3

See what impulse love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called children of God; and we are. This is why the world does not know us: because it did not know him.

Beloved, we are God's children and what we shall be has not yet been shown. We know that when it is shown we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. All who have such hope in him purify themselves, as he is pure.

Gospel: Mt 5:1-12

Jesus ran down and his disciples gathered around him. Then he spoke and began to teach them:

"Fortunate are those who know the spirit of the poor, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Fortunate are those who mourn, they shall be consoled.

Fortunate are the gentle, they shall possess their land.

Fortunate are those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they shall be satisfied.

Fortunate are the merciful, for they shall find mercy.

Fortunate are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Fortunate are those who work for peace, they shall be called children of God.

Fortunate are those who are persecuted for the cause of justice, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Fortunate are you, when people insult you and persecute you and speak all kinds of evil against you falsely because you are my followers. Be glad and joyful, for a great reward is kept for you in God.

Commentary:

A priest was asked a group of children if anyone could define a saint. One youngster, thinking of stained glass windows, replied, "A saint is a person whose light shines through." She had for a child, but better still.

The saints whose images are depicted in stained glass and on holy cards are famous for allowing God's light to shine through their words and actions. The apostles, martyrs, bishops, virgins, religious and other holy men and women whom Jesus has acknowledged through the Church have one thing in common: they allowed God's love and goodness to be reflected in the lives of the poor and the forgotten. May we, too, be saints in this way.

This great feast of All Saints invites the members of the countless throngs and host of God who adore and worship Jesus Christ. We, too, face challenges as we live our lives here and our spirits serve the good things that reveal us to heaven, and until that time we make a conscious effort to be holy of the poor and the forgotten. May we be saints in this way.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Flowers for the living

SOMETIMES WE HEAR IT SAID, THAT WE ARE prone to forget the dead, or that we take them for granted. This observation applies to the way we relate to both the nation's illustrious dead and our own personal heroes. Sometimes, the elaborate official rites mask public indifference to yet another commemoration of yet another founding father's death anniversary; sometimes the ritzed games

EDITORIALS and the obsessive ranching at the cemetery on All Souls' weekend obscure the fact that the younger generations know so little about those members of the family who have gone ahead.

And yet, the remarkable thing is: There is that undying attempt to remember, there is that continuing effort to honor the dead, even if only on official holidays or religious feasts. Would that we could all say the same thing about our own relationship to the living.

The joke that asserts that women receive flowers only twice in their life—when they are being courted and when they are dead—has the hint of social satire; the teeth marks of exaggeration twist the outline of truth.

Or, at least, of a certain truth. We can take the living for granted too. We can grow indifferent to the sacrifices of the living too. In the deadly language of the young: "Ma at Pa," short for "Malay ko at pakialam ko"—the English idiomatic equivalent, which unfortunately loses much of the insouciance in the translation, is "I don't know and I don't care."

If we could only treat the living the way we officially treat the dead: with a sense of appreciation, of empathy, for a life seen in full.

The deaths of famous people can be instructive. The national outpouring of sympathy at the death of former President Corazon Aquino, or the worldwide spasm of grief at the death of Michael Jackson, show us how a person, any person, ought to be remembered: in light. That principle comes from a famous musical play, but "Remember me in light" also comes straight out of, or reflects, the perspective of the great traditional religions. Without glossing over shortcomings, charity encourages us to remember the dead for the good they have done.

Would that we could all say the same thing about the living. A thought, then, for All Saints' Day: We should treat the living the way, in death like today's, we treat the dead.

Masks for the dead

IF ONE WERE TO JUDGE FROM TELEVISION COVerage alone, the American tradition of "trick or treat" on Halloween, complete with masks and costumes, has become something of a tradition in urban areas in the Philippines as well, at least in the last 10 or 15 years.

We can decry the galloping Westernization that this now rite of passage represents, or we can denounce the creeping consumerization that makes the yearly event possible, or we can condemn the seeming subversion of the Christian faith that devil costumes and depictions of the Grim Reaper signify.

In fact, many have already done so. There is an shortage of critics of Westernization, or opponents of our increasingly commercial culture, or outraged defenders of the Catholic Church.

There is much to be said for the opposition, especially when it comes to the issue of the unthinking acceptance of cultural fads.

But there is in fact a deeper religious meaning to the ghoulish practice we have come to associate with Halloween: the tradition of dressing up as the devil or as death itself (plus those of heavenly (trendy figures from popular culture like zombies and vampires) teaches us to evolve with the mystery of dying. It helps us prepare for the inevitable.

If the younger generations grow up less afraid of the fact of death, less spooked by the ghostly or the seemingly supernatural, perhaps we should count that, not as trick, but as treat.

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Erap's impossible dream

SEPARATE OPINION

Ingrid A. Cruz

JOSEPH ESTRADA, FORMER PRESIDENT AND subsequently ex-convict for the crime of plunder for which the penalty of reclusion perpetua has been commutedly forgiven by Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, is now running for the highest office in the land again.

Many people are upbeat, recalling the constitutional prohibitions, but long chains of is not applicable when the incumbent, in any case, it must yield to the will of the people, which believes must prevail over the Constitution.

In his imaginings, his victory in the next presidential election is settled. In the mind, the public-relations might as well spit him and surrender to his invincible army of the middle masses boldly brandishing the banners of the poor.

It is his prediction that he will win in the next election on May of 2010, as he did in 1998. Despite his enemies trample on the polls, a consistent and unlawful interpretation of the Constitution will prevent him from returning to Malacañang as mandated by the sovereign electorate.

The Court, he says, may prevent the assuming of venue in his favor and deny him his poll victory. Difficult rewards, indeed, and he is prepared by the people as they did in the election of Cory Aquino against Marcos.

It seems that Joseph Estrada presumes too much.

The will of the people he expects to support him is not that strong as it was, when he won in 1998, albeit with the support of only 39.9 percent of the votes. Such installment number can hardly be called "the will of the people." Moreover, that was before he was impeached for those odious crimes the people who idolized him could hardly believe.

There recently was a one-page ad including a comment of the chief justice on the morning of a political question. Its users only one vote in the 15-member Supreme Court that may have a different view from what he has.

The Constitution is less permissive when it says in categorical terms that "the President shall not be eligible for any reelection."

In the last presidential election under the Commonwealth Constitution, the equally prestigious rivals were Sergio Osmeña for who preferred to attend to his work in Malacañang instead of campaigning to be retained in the high office he was holding, and Manuel Roxas whose saccharine antipathetic to the United States were enough to make self-respecting Filipinos throw up in shame.

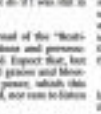
They were both popular with the people, but not as popular as Gen. Douglas MacArthur, whom the Filipinos adored for fulfilling his promise to return to the Philippines during the war and kept alive our hope for the end of the Japanese occupation of our country. We would have gladly rewarded him by making him the president of the Philippines except for one overriding objection.

The will of the people then would not have prevailed against the Commonwealth Constitution, which had not been duly amended and ratified. That fundamental law strictly required that the president of the Philippines should be a citizen of the Philippines along with the other obligatory credentials. Something MacArthur was willing to accept that but which, the Constitution of 1935 would not have permitted it.

So, for Estrada to base his hopes only on the assessments of the masses, there would have to be an amendment of the present Constitution enabling him to do what he can't do now: qualify for the office in Malacañang. That amendment, to be effective, should be ratified by the majority of the votes.

Such amendment of the present Constitution has not been proposed and ratified under to which XVII. It remains a mere figment of the imagination of Estrada, and his followers, among the many impossible dreams that Erap cherishes to make him again the president of the Philippines.

Final destination



MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

THE STORY TO TELL ABOUT A DYING MOTHER who told her children: "When I die, have me cremated, and have my ashes scattered all over the mall." When asked why, she answered: "So that way, I will be assured that you will remember me and visit me once in a while."

* * *

Today is a day for remembering, and for those who can, this is a day for visiting the resting places of our departed loved ones. Today, too, is a day for remembering that we are all called to become saints. For, there is eternal life. There is glory beyond the grave.

* * *

In today's Gospel (Mt. 5, 1-12) Jesus shows us the road to take so that we will not be mere souls, but saints. The road is the road of the "Beatitudes." Take time today to check the road you are taking, and the life you are living. Do you experience poverty in spirit, mourning, meekness? Is there righteousness, mercy and purity of heart, peace, or persecution in your life? Then, "Rejoice and be glad for your reward will be great in heaven!"

* * *

This world will tell you that the "Beatitudes" is a weird even a stupid teaching. Why be poor? Be rich! Why mourn? Enjoy! Why be meek? Be proud! Why be righteous? Be wise! Why be merciful? Be revered! Why be clean of heart? Just don't get caught! Why be a peacemaker? Who cares? Why be persecuted? Fight back! Follow the world, and you will have fleeting peace. Follow the "Beatitudes," and you will have true peace, that peace which the world cannot give, nor take away. It's your call. It's your choice.

* * *

I visited former Aliw Gov. Cheryl Vallejo last Tuesday in the crowded Quezon City jail to break the news that his father, Jun, himself a former Aliw governor, had passed away at the age of 91. It was a different "friend" I met. Here was a man who took the news with peace, equanimity and submission to God's will. He, proud of worldly comfort and security, he has found peace, comfort and security in God's will and mercy. What he said when we parted struck me: "It's so painful I could not even be there at the deathbed of my father, but here all I can do is to really pray for him with all my heart and soul, something which, perhaps, I would not and I could not do if I was still in power."

* * *

When one takes the road of the "Beatitudes," a lot of deprivations and persecutions will be encountered. Expect that, but expect, too, many rainbow graces and blessings on that road—and peace, which this world will not understand, nor care to listen to.

* * *

"It's just a matter of time," All Souls' Day is a timely reminder for all of us that, sooner or later, we will all die. Yes, the journey will come to an end someday. And when it does let us to say, "Here I am, Lord. I come to do your will. My life, my death is in your hands, for the love and the peace we carry in our hearts. Hello! You who are so engrossed in making more money, and in dueling and committing murders of power, are you listening?

* * *

For those who are so focused on "image," it would be good for you to reflect today: "What will people say about me after I die?" For those who are surrounded by obsequious lackeys, entertainers and jesters, remember, too, that you are invaded staff and servants may tell me the shows for you once your power and money are gone. The bottom line is: "What will God tell you when you finally come face-to-face with Him?"

* * *

We have had our share of national calamities recently and one can't help but pray: Lord, enough! Please, no more suffering for our people who are already suffering. How much more can we take? And yet, somehow we are still here and we are still on our feet. Where is our strength, as a nation, coming from? The "Beatitudes" helps us to be resilient, hopeful and patient. But, the "Beatitudes" should also lead us to move on. The "Beatitudes" should lead us to become not only reactive but also proactive.

* * *

In our earthly journey we encounter all sorts of people. Some are sinners. Some are saints. Many of us are not big time sinners and definitely not saints. What should keep us humble and hopeful is the thought that there is no sinner without a chance, and that there is no sinner without a part.

* * *

All Souls' Day should remind us that we have a soul. All Saints' Day should remind us that we are called to holiness, and that we all are potential saints.

* * *

Some sinners will find some sinners linger on. One thing sure is, storms end. Another thing God's sure, too: Whatever kind of love you are having, it will end. Enjoy it's now, cherish it's sweetness, which is exciting. It's your call. It's your choice.

* * *

The CD of Fr Jerry Orbos entitled "Journey to the Heart" is now available at Sid Record Bars, in digital format. The songs can be downloaded at online music stores, Napster and iTunes. Please consider Father's CD, and my latest book "Meaningful Moments" for National Book stores as gift giveaways this Christmas, and help our Filipino missionaries abroad. Thank you.

* * *

A moment with the Lord:

Lord, help me to remember that I have a soul and that Heaven is my final destination. Amen.

Election queries answered at ehope2010.ph

WITH DUE RESPECT

Artemio V. Panganiban

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS is a powerful agency. To be able to conduct honest, orderly and peaceful elections, Congress has given it many enumerated rights and judicial powers, by our Constitution. Like the president of the Republic, the Comelec enforces and administers laws, except that their executive authority is limited to "those administrative matters relative to the conduct of an election, plebiscite, initiative, referendum and recall."

Grave abuse. Like the courts, it decides controversies. However, the Comelec referred to as to quasi-judicial agency, for generally, it does not decide disputes on electoral matters on final and unappealable, except by certiorari when there has been beyond its authority or "with grave abuse of discretion." There is grave abuse of discretion when, as old as the hills, another's in the Constitution, the law or jurisprudence, or (2) is exercised capriciously, whimsically or arbitrarily out of malice, ill will or personal bias.

Only on three grounds may the Supreme Court (and may not have authority) reverse or modify a Comelec decision. Further, the Supreme Court is definitely not to the presumed expertise of the Comelec on electoral matters. Despite the finality of its rulings and the difficulty of reversing them, the commission has opened itself to questions posed by media and by the people in general. Such transparency and accountability should forget the trust of our people.

At my suggestion, it opened last Oct. 20 a website, **ehope2010.ph**, where it agreed to post its answers to comments raised in this column. Readers may also submit questions directly to Commissioner Rene V. Sarmiento (rvsarmiento@pldt.net.ph), with copy to me by monitoring purposes. Affected lately, queries may also be posted directly on the website.

The website is intended to be a reliable archive of its poll information. Ultimately, its goal is to assure the public of the Comelec's readiness to conduct the 2010 polls and re-minimize. If not to-

tally banish, lingering fears of a failed election.

In a visit at my home last Oct. 20, Commissioner Sarmiento and Atty. Esther Resurreccion, Director of Information Technology Service (ITS), accompanied by lawyer Albert Bautista and Commission's IT consultant Antonio Villareal, assured me that all questions would be answered on the website. Mort Bautista, I will write about two questions on one computer.

It's to Estrada problems. The question: "How do you rule a problem like Estrada" asked in the same but Sunday elected interesting reactions. In his Oct. 26 column, my business colleague, Neal H. Cruz, answered, "Let the people decide!" He quoted his constant refrain in the old Inquirer column: "The people can do." The voice of the people is the voice of God." Editorials were the 2001 polls. "This means that the sovereign people have forgiven him — and must have forgotten their elected official."

After publicly quoting Oscar Wilde's quip "Every Estrada man has habitually by the Constitution from consuming again, Mabini sitting turned around and was asked that he discussed a new study at the top post. To justify the rebellion, Vice Secretary Cesar Buenaseda cited another Latin maxim of the same group, "salus populi est suprema lex" The voice of the people is the supreme law. It is wise to let the people decide."

My Supreme Court colleagues, retired Justice Vicente V. Mendoza, put the issue in juridical language. Estrada's eligibility posed "a question of interpretation... the question is not when voters think but what the Supreme Court reads [the Constitution] to mean. And to...the question is not political" in nature, but a legal one.

In other words, whether Erap should be allowed to run for president should be deemed a "justiciable" issue to be settled in accordance with legal principles, not a "political" question to be left to the people to vote on. On that basis, he denies the motion to dismiss the petition." However, if the tribunal fails to resolve the issue on time and Erap is "somehow" voted president, then his election would be a fait accompli. Thus, he said, the Court would be faced with a dilemma similar to that which confronted the Supreme Court when Ferdinand Marcos (Senator) March 31, 1973).

Simple solutions. Or, the other hand, retired Justice Cruz has a simple solution, "Comelec should just disallow Erap from filing his Certificate of Candidacy and let Erap go to the Supreme Court." However, I submit that the Comelec will probably wait for the proper parties to file their petitions challenging his eligibility and then, act on appropriate proceedings. Besides, this is an essential part of due process that all agencies of government are bound to observe.

Two enough, at the Euphoria in Manila forum on Oct. 25, Comelec spokesman Jimmy Jimenez said that the poll body would give due course to Estrada's COC. His name would therefore be printed on the ballot, unless the eligibility and is finally declared otherwise by the Supreme Court prior to the ballot printing on Jan. 9 (what is impossible).

At bottom, in whatever way the Comelec and the Court resolve the Estrada riddle, there will be no debate, leading another reader Dr. S. B. Santos, to lament, "Erap's problem will cause the nation to bleed like Cristo." The commission's constitutional mandate of cum, I just wish some of them has hypertension, to which one, I will be happy to volunteer my chauffeur and valet. Here are "holes" has accepted Filipino humor is always refreshing in the face of the toughest crises bounding us.

Comments are welcome at dhe@panganiban.com; legal@panganiban.com

Chiz Escudero 2010

THE POPULARITY OF FRANCIS JOSEPH ESCUDERO does not emanate of the candidly and possible presidential material for 2010, his boss attributed to name change. Some claim it is his eloquence. Many have marveled at his ability to stretch a single thought into a 20-minute social commentary, dripping with synonyms and similes, delivered with the same detached intensity of a call center agent explaining to the 300th caller how

METHOD TO MADNESS

Patricia Evangelista

to order their electricity bill to the clients. Others claim it is his looks. His tall lean torso is shirtless exercises, surrounded by colleagues carrying potbellies is entirely devoid pineapple rolls.

Chiz

According to his personal website, his "rise into the national scene occurred in nothing less than" meteoric." He is described as the "youngest senator in the history of the country" and his various characteristics — including the record "Most Admired TV Personality" in 2008 — prove "he has not gone unnoticed."

The most trusted official in the land, as the subject of boycott, spent the nine years of his political career in the coattails of the father of the Philippine People's Coalition (PPC). In the last few months, although they attend his political commitment... "I say yes to think about it"—he sees the party's acknowledged standard-bearer, the darling of leadership forums and youth conferences. With his very recent defection from the NPC on the grounds of personal convictions, Chiz made it clear he had not yet decided which fan-side has become the golden boy of principled leadership, another touchstone of national change on the heels of Noynoy Aquino's rise in the nation's mind, if has nationalist choice.

Escudero announced he was defecting from the NPC... it a press conference where he was joined by party leaders. He would finally declare his intentions to run for president. He gave three reasons.

First, he said that whoever plans to run as president must not belong to any party, not NPC, LP, NP, Lakas or any other, but must belong to the party of the Philippine people. In the grand tradition of Cha Escudero, this statement relied on ground wheels. This is the ideal presidential candidate. All his party-mates must be all Filipinos. Child or adult, woman or man, rich or poor, the educated and the not, yellow or red or cuba, whether a supporter or not, should be treated equally and the same. He cannot only see and hear what his party-mates say, while his ears can't. Even the three who do not belong to his party, those who do not belong to his group.

Second, he says, "whoever is running, will run, or will become president of the nation must not be chained hand and foot to the party." If this is all Chiz will happen, he says, the nation cannot believe that he cannot endure the hardships of governance. "For me, my party remains dormant for as long as whoever is running for office. If this is the case, how can he hold accountable the corrupt in government if they belong to his own party?" He says, in his words, a lot of concrete changes from within is necessary to the state of the oil industry.

But third, he says, "I am leaving my party because I believe that in this way I can help it more." Chiz says that he can't be an asset to fulfill with regard to the elections, at this time, at this moment, not as member of any party, not as member to anyone, but only myself, as myself."

In summary, this is what all three of his points mean: A man running for president must not belong to a party, because to belong to a party is to give up independence of action.

In a follow-up interview with *TV Patrol's* Ted Failon, asked on what occasion his party has unfairly dictated his actions and choices, Escudero denied he can be dictated to.

"I have never been influenced by my party. When the company of my party has been against what I think, I was the kind or of the opposition to Congress. When some of my party-mates are under the administration in 2007, I was under the tentative opposition, and they respected and accepted it."

It is difficult to understand then Escudero's sudden disappointment of party loyalties. With the unimpeachable character he has shown, he would have to be fill to submit to the lies and drama of a party defection. He states, although he has never been influenced in matters of conscience, no one for president demands more. Assuming there is truth to his claim, he is admitting he acquires he will have less personal conviction as a president, or he believes his personal convictions are flawed.

Every party defection is generally a political decision, and the few ideological ones are far between. After all, there is a reason why parties exist in this nation, and it is not for some committed sake of ideology. Every party announces good governance as its platform, with desires to remove from our the fence. A party provides machinery, often financial support, provides a vast network of contacts, a security in its power in the Philippines. I have little to say about the praiseworthy of Escudero overcoming in the NPC, what I find distasteful is the great stolen honour of morality he is wearing to justify a political decision. Perhaps there is truth in reasons of a lack of financial support, or a failure to have the party's endorsement, but whatever the reason, I find it difficult to swallow Escudero's assertion as a righteous stand, the same way I cannot buy Joss de Guzman in "second revolution."

The choice is theirs itself in the first. He claims he cannot be corrupted, that his decisions are his own. He denies his party but ever influenced him in the past. And yet he expects an enlightened electorate to believe that he will not be swayed by a party, irrelevant of the man, can compromise a president, the dominance the idea of looking only to a party for advice, when nothing compels a man to look only to his own party. His entire list of changes he wants does not inhibit this, none of which have anything to do with whether or not he belongs to a party—assuming of course he is the same man, he claims to have been all his life. Filipinos generally are very fond of the cult of the one particular party, well and good, but again, it has little to do with the content of a party, and more to say about the SPC itself.

I do not see the fun to defend the NPC, or to celebrate the less than admirable quality of the existing party system. I write what has been said and debated by one-man debating in the House when he is simply a man who made a choice by himself; the same as most men. I notice that because I am one of the young people he claims to represent. Mainly, I write this because, very frankly, I cannot trust a man whose mouth says one thing, and his eyes another.

'Ondoy' ghost stories

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IN THE WAKE OF THE FLOOD AND DEVASTATION caused by Tropical Storm "Ondoy" in Metro Manila, ghost stories have proliferated along with the local and garbage. Some of them may have a basis in truth and reality; others may simply be in the realm of urban legends and modern poetry (sic?).

But in the "spirit" of the season, let me share with you two stories I heard from other people, who told me they heard it from others, too.

Believe that or not, you can always have fun with the proverbial grain of salt. Take them as entertainment in the weekend of ghosts and ghoulies, unfortunate and unfortunate, and a feeling if there's more relief "soon."

* * *

THE FIRST, my compadre Theodolfo, has never been much public probably because it involves a company that dominates the local fast-food industry.

Somewhere in Ugong City, the fast-food chain had a second-floor outlet that promised a safe, dry sanctuary for its employees, customers and bystanders caught by the rising floodwaters of "Ondoy." Almost 30 people were huddled inside the outlet, which had floor-to-ceiling glass windows and doors, when water started to seep into the second floor. Some of the customers became aware of the danger they were in and tried to unlock the doors. It was too late. The water level rose suddenly and outside was too high and it was impossible to leave the door open.

Panicking, the people inside began clambering up the tables and counters, frantically seeking a way out by way of the roof. The water rose and rose...

Because, rider reached the fast-food outlet a day or so later, found the drowned bodies of the crew, customers and bystanders floating in the water. Some of them were still visible on the ceiling, signs of the horrified but all-in-vain futile struggle the people waged against the powers of Ondoy.

* * *

IN PROVIDENT Village, just a few miles from Ayala Alabang Village, the village's church played host to a meeting of senior citizens. By the time the meeting was supposed to end, however, many of the seniors around the church impossible. The old people inside began to panic as water rose up to their knees, then waists.

They shouted for help and were heard by a construction worker trapped in a nearby housing project. Undaunted by the waist-deep water, he helped the old folk climb up the atrium, the highest spot in the church. When the water continued to rise, the worker got some tools and began to pound on the church ceiling, saying the physical exertion would help keep him warm. It seems to that the old folk could hardly stay the cold.

After some hours, families and friends of the senior citizens came to rescue them, loading them onto improvised boats and rafts. The only problem was, there weren't enough boats to ferry all the senior citizens who looks that others were left behind. They would wait on the roof for the rescuers to return for them.

Alas, the water was too swiftly. By the time rescuers arrived at the church to bring the old seniors home, they were nowhere to be found. Until publicity, they were thought easy by the strong current.

But that's not the end of the story.

* * *

BEHIND THE close of the old women's disappearance, a homeowners association was just looking a beauty pageant for the summer Lil' dreams so that the kids could have a wedding later that day and had no inkling of the chaos outside.

Stepping out on the sidewalk, she was discombobulated to find the water up to her knees, and her car floating away from where she had parked it. Panicking, she began swearing in different directions until an old woman stopped beside her and inquired: "Don't you know where you're going? Here, let me help you find shelter."

The homeowners association, either missed that a senior citizen had come to her rescue, allowed to hold the old woman's arm, but the old woman firmly took hold of her hand instead, showing amazing strength.

Arm in arm, the pair waded through the surging floodwaters, at one point, the floodwaters even stopped into an open manhole, falling over her knee-deep. She would have drowned had not the old woman lifted her in one swift move.

Slowly, painstakingly, the two of them walked on until they came upon a nearby church. Here they found huddled hundreds of other wet, miserable and terrified souls, but in their midst the Beauty Queen was nowhere to be found. The homeowners association nearly wept herself. As she stepped into the church, she turned to thank her savior, but was startled to find the old woman was nowhere to be found. Where had she gone? And why did she leave so suddenly without waiting for a word of thanks from someone whom life she had saved? Thoughts of the old woman would haunt the homeowners association in the days to come.

* * *

IF THE days following Ondoy, the homeowners association many of her stories similar to hers: of old women appearing suddenly and providing strength and succor to younger people in need of rescue.

And then she watched a TV show that detailed the events following the storm victims' meeting in the church of Provident Village. One saw particularly struck by the narrative of the four old women, left behind on the church roof, and how they simply disappeared.

Could any of the four women have been her rescuer? The homeowners association believes so. The appearance of her elderly savior—and the eventual disappearance of her—all point to the supernatural.

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Waiting for Obama

WORLD VIEW

Simeon Ee

THIS IS THE SEASON FOR ASIAN GATHERINGS. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) summit in Thailand in late October brought all the key players of Asia together. Come mid-November, almost all of them will meet again in Singapore at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) summit, which will include other Pacific leaders, plus US President Barack Obama.

Summits are a circus with many rings and an orgasm. As the focus cannot, the EU-Southeast manufacturers met counterparts from China, Japan and South Korea. On the 13 occasion, Asean and apec each host dialogue partners.

Some 42 agreements were reportedly penned at the meeting, on issues ranging from outstanding trade and economic matters to the launch of a human rights commission. But had be a summit that some leaders would happily forget as each meeting planned for April in Bangkok had been disrupted by protesters—"red shirts" who support ousted Thai premier Thaksin Shinawatra.

As for Obama, he will feel out Japan, and, while in Japan, will also attempt to shore US-Asean summits afterwards, he will go to China and South Korea. What additional agreements might American's penchant bring when he meets the region?

Obama is still fighting back home for his health-care initiative, and is hamstrung from saying on divisive things in time for the Copenhagen summit, which is to open a consensus inside to the Kyoto Protocol. But there are risks that he will come to make or put a star here and photo opportunities while overseeing his strength for other battles. But most is needed and should be expected of him.

Starting with Japan, Obama needs to cement a good working relationship with Yukio Hatoyama, the new prime minister. Japan is the linchpin for US-East Asian commitment that includes India, Australia and New Zealand, while the Chinese and others question widening the circle. The United States should welcome the Japanese initiative and engage with Asia as a whole. Keeping Japan close is a starting point.

Moving ahead, however, much attention will be on how Obama interacts with Burma's (Myanmar's) leader, who will also be present. Obama should stand for democracy and help push for a clean vote in the elections that the junta has promised by 2010.

But there are often, broader opportunities. Asean has been the hub for Asian regionalism, but none in Australia have postponed joining treaty on the larger countries. Southeast Asians have a renewed optimism toward American leadership, and meaningful initiatives can be united that would complement with regional aspirations.

One such initiative is for free trade. While the United States has moved on the sidelines, new Asian agreements have not moved US Sen. Richard Lugar has floated the idea of a free-trade agreement between the US and Asean, but with Asians isolated, this may be too difficult politically, and an issue with an ongoing push to revive Doha.

Another option is for the US to join the 3-Trans-Pacific Partnership. This was proposed late in the Bush administration in order to forge links with some Asian members—Singapore, Vietnam and Brunei—as well as others across the Pacific. This would be hard to include their open borders with Asian economies—Malaysia and Thailand—with the eventual aim being an Apec-wide agreement, which would be an impressive achievement if realized by the end of 2011, when it will be Obama's turn to play host to all the leaders.

In the face of crisis and unemployment, the American public may question free trade. But trade and more domestic businesses realize that with growing Asian markets are vital for their future profits and overall economic recovery.

Most economic frameworks are among leaders only, but an American initiative could bring them and ensure that the region remains open and engaged with the US. It could also help Obama's domestic agenda if the government is to guarantee members toward the booming Chinese economy.

Of course, when Obama arrives in Beijing, he must continue to strengthen cooperation with China. On the economic crisis, climate change and nuclear issues, Obama will need China and he can potentially be decisive actor. But the US must also engage in a more multilateral way to include Southeast Asia's smaller countries. China has been charming their way the past decade, and the EU must offer an attractive alternative.

Ultimately, Apec is talking shop, while Asean is an arena for actual negotiations. Obama, China and Japan, with India on the side. But, despite the rivalries and all the chatter, it is clear that Asians are coming closer together. And, while Asians agonize a more unified and talk with tensions and flash points, the US has been the stabilizing power in the region.

Obama has the opportunity to ensure that the region continues to see the US as the essential actor—more open and helpful than before. It is for whatever this, Obama's long stay will be valuable for Americans, and Asians will realize that it was worth waiting for him. Project by subscription

Simeon Ee is chair of the Singapore institute of International Affairs and a fellow at the new Society.

THEY SAID

Debt relief

"It would be the height of irresponsibility and callousness if the government continues to allocate billions to maintain debt overhang that the Filipino people are in desperate need of relief."

—Akbayan House party-list Rep. Amir Mirasol

TALK *of the* TOWN

Please send feedback to ...
Editor Joaquin V. Sarmiento Jr.

How to make a boat for flooded streets

A BANANGKA ("pangkalan sa bangka" or boat for floods) being used by the Red Cross on flooded streets in Muntinlupa.

By Felix Bautista Jr.

WITH FLOODS EXPECTED TO LAST A FEW MORE MONTHS IN the foreshore towns around Laguna Lake, there is a need for a simple boat to ferry people and goods through flooded streets. The boat should be capable of being pulled, poled or paddled through the water, it should be light enough to be carried above obstructions or the occasional shallow water, but can still take a good-sized load.

Called PHBYC bubuglahs (short for pangkalan sa bangka), the boat has been tested for load-bearing capacity and stability. Capable of carrying up to 4-6 people, it is practically unsinkable because of the flotation chambers. However, it should not be used in strong currents.

Easy to build for P2,500

Technically a punt (flat-bottomed boat), the bubuglah is cheap and easy to build, with minimal waste of materials. It can be built using simple hand tools like a saw, hammer, plane and measuring tape at a cost of about P2,500.

The boat was designed by members of the Philippine Home Boatbuilders Yacht Club (PHBYC), the only organization of home-boat builders in the country. The PHBYC (www.pinoyboats.org) has built 10 bubuglahs with the help of its sponsors and distributed them to various Red Cross chapters and family representatives.

Follow the instructions below to build your own PHBYC bubuglah.

Materials

- 2 pieces, ¼-inch marine plywood (actually 5-mm thick) for sides of boat and flotation chamber
- 1 piece, ½-inch marine plywood (actually 10-mm thick) for the bottom
- 3 pieces, 1x4 kiln-dried tanguile or lauan for battens
- 2 pieces, 1x2x8 kiln-dried tanguile or lauan
- 1 piece, 1x4x12 kiln-dried tanguile or lauan
- 1 liter of epoxy glue, ½ kilo of ¼-inch common wire nails, 1 gallon of epoxy or enamel paint

Cut the ¼-inch plywood using the carving guide for the sides. (Illustration 1: Side panels carving guide.)

45-degree angle

Stack 2 pieces of the 10-inch-wide plywood and 2 pieces of the 12-inch-wide plywood. Level them at the rear and bottom. Cut the front of the stacked pieces at a 45-degree angle to make the sides of the boat and the sides of the flotation chamber. Cutting all four pieces together will ensure that all pieces are exactly the same.

Stack the 12-inch-wide piece against the 10-inch-wide piece which you cut for the sides and draw a line on top of the wider piece. This line will show where to put the battens (wooden pieces used to attach plywood). Also draw the line on both sides of the 10-inch panel, and for both sides of the boat.

Glue, nail

Glue and nail the 1x2 battens on all four sides of the 12-inch-wide (bottom) sides. Glue and nail the 1x1 battens on the bottom, front and rear sides of the 10-inch-wide side, including under the line that you drew. On the top side of the 10-inch side, glue and nail the 1x2 batten, opposite the side of the 1x1 batten.

Make sure that when you put the battens, you make mirror images. You don't want to make both left sides of the boat. Do the same with the flotation chamber sides.

The glue should be mixed thoroughly. Mix just enough epoxy that can be used in 15 minutes. Nail the plywood to the battens approximately 6 inches apart. Only the glue will make the joints waterproof, so make sure that you apply it liberally and that all joints are filled.

Bottom panel

Cut the bottom panel as shown from the ½-inch plywood. (Illustration 2: Bottom panel carving guide). Draw two lines on the bottom panel, exactly 12 3/16 inches from the sides. Glue and nail the flotation sides to the bottom.

The plywood side of the flotation panels should be to the inside of the boat, with the battens facing outward. Then glue and nail the boat sides on the battens, with the battens to the inside of the boat. (Illustration 3: Cross-section and elevation of boat).

Flotation baffle

Fit the flotation baffle (compartment side) to the inside of the flotation tank. The baffle is added protection. In case one or several of the cells inside the tank are punctured, there are other watertight cells to keep the boat floating.

The 48-inch by 10-inch panel cut from the plywood sheet (but made the side guide 48 inches) is used as the rear transom (front or rear panel). Again, mark a line 12 ½ inches from the shorter sides of the panel. This will show where the flotation sides should be. Glue and nail the rear transom to the sides and (bottom) sides. Put additional battens for the plywood to be nailed to so as to make the bottom with the sides and the top of the flotation.

Hand plane or sand paper

Use a hand plane or sand paper to make a 45-degree angle on the bottom panel at the front of the boat, to ensure that the front transom lies flat. The remaining 10-inch by 48-inch piece cut from the side-panel sheet will serve as the front transom of the boat.

But since this panel is short by 4 1/8 inches, the balance will come from the plywood sheet from which the bottom is cut. Nail a 12x4-foot piece of wood to the inside of the boat to serve as butt block.

Finally, nail a 4-foot length of the 1x2 battens to the top of the front transom. Use epoxy liberally on the joints for watertightness.

Front transom

Splice a 3-foot length of a 1x2 wood to a 45-degree angle to make two pieces. Use the pieces as battens to stiffen the bottom near the front transom. Also put battens on the top of the flotation chambers.

Paint the inside of the flotation chamber to protect the wood, except for the battens on which the cover of the flotation chamber will be nailed. Once the paint is dry, cover the flotation tank with the two pieces of 12-inch by 93-inch plywood.

A punt or a flat-bottomed boat is cheap and easy to build, with minimal waste of materials

Color of choice

Paint the boat to the color of your choice. Use either epoxy primer or flat white enamel for the first coat. The top coat can be epoxy enamel or quick dry enamel.

The PHBYC can train volunteers on how to build the boats, so that the volunteers can then assist neighbors in building more boats for their community. Write to bub@pinoyboats.org for more information.

(Felix Bautista Jr. is a communicator by profession and a handyman by inclination. He builds radio amplifiers and wooden boats as a hobby.)

Illustration 1

Illustration 2

Illustration 3

A PONGO built by Tony Oposa Jr. has solved the flooding problem on his property on Bantayan Island in Cebu.

Implement 1989 rainwater-collection law

By Tony Oposa Jr.

FLOODING IS EXCESS WATER that does not have a receptacle. If so, find a receptacle.

It is a simple matter of allocating small (from 100-200 square meters or 1,000 sqm) parcels of land in every barangay (village). Then dig a deep hole to catch the excess water.

The benefits from the excavation are as follows:

- Provision of at least significantly-sustainable funding.
- Creates a pond for storing fish and thus harvesting a source of food, especially by the poor. (This prevents the pond from being stagnant and turning into a breeding ground for mosquitoes.)
- Establishes a mini park.
- Provides an area for the hands for regeneration (especially vegetables and fruits).
- Improves the microclimatic conditions by cooling the place.
- Recharges the badly depleted ground water.
- Stores water to prepare you for drought. With climate change looking us in the neck, droughts are coming and will be more severe, believe me.

And oh, by the way, this is one wishful thinking on the part of an environmental advocate. It is actually contained in a law that not even those who are tasked with implementing it know about—Republic Act No. 6716 (1989). It states that:

"The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) shall, within sixty ([illegible]) days after the approval of this Act, undertake construction of ... rainwater collectors to all barangays in the Philippines in such number as may be needed and feasible, taking into consideration the population, hydrologic conditions ..." (SEC. 2, March 1989).

This was reinforced by Executive Order No. 774, which President Macapagal-Arroyo issued in December 2008. How many has the DPWH done? About seven so far, and only very recently. How many barangays are there? More than 42,000. Very good.

The first objection one would immediately hear is land is expensive. Well, how much is the cost of one unit of land compared with the benefits that flow from it and the recurring cost of floods? In this context, the cost of the land is literally nothing. Besides, we should not look at it as an item of cost, rather as a low-cost infrastructure investment.

But then, the government, particularly the DPWH, is not reputed to like low-cost but effective alternatives. Its attitude seems to be that the bigger the cost, the better and the lower it will be done.

I call on interested lawyers to join me in a proactive legal action to compel the implementation of a law that has languished in the mothball of bureaucratic ... for 20 years! (I or call on Congress to inquire why this far-sighted law passed more than two decades ago has not been implemented.

The time for talk is over. It is time for action, and in this case, for legal action!

(Tony Oposa Jr., an environmental lawyer, is a 2009 Ramon Magsaysay awardee. He is the president of the Law of Nature Foundation.)

Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Burgonia

Flood turns cemetery into tourist spot

By Robert Gamaga
Inquirer Central Luzon

BOTOLAN, ZAMBALES—THE CEMETERY IN the village of Paco here has been drawing people, like most of the country's cemeteries, in the run-up to All Saints' Day.

Only this time, counted among the busy throng are people like 17-year-old Lolita Dominguez, who came from Manila's other students from Metro Manila to see the cemetery submerged under floodwaters and whose tombs were forced open by strong current.

"I really wanted to see this for myself. (This sort of event) can only be seen in the movies. But here it is; it's true... Some of the tombs are still open and you can see the coffins inside," she said.

On Thursday, some residents were busy repairing tombs of their relatives, which were damaged by rampaging floodwaters unleashed when Typhoon "Ondoy" and "Pepeng" struck Central Luzon at the start of October.

About 40 tombs were washed away. A third of the cemetery was under water when television news crews broadcast its condition.

Those images had startled people who witnessed Ondoy's onslaught in Metro Manila, Dominguez said.

Gloria Eggiet told the Inquirer that some of the coffins in damaged tombs were empty after some residents transferred the remains of their relatives in the cemetery left untouched by the floods.

Danny Dalupan, 47, a fisherman from Barangay Burgos, said some damaged tombs were left unattended because relatives did not know where to find them.

"There are so many problems that the worst gave us. There is so much we have lost. Right now, most of the people here still live in evacuation centers. Even if we wanted to take care of our dead, we have to take care of our families first," Dalupan said.

He said while he found time to repair the tombs of his relatives at the Paco cemetery, he still worries about how his family would continue living in this flood-devastated town.

"Those of us who are still living have lots of problems to contend with. We're just doing what we can day by day," he said.

On Thursday, then resident Arnel Ahaga, 38, a carpenter, joined three other workers in building a shrine near the submerged area of the cemetery so people who lost the remains of their loved ones from the recent floods could gather in one place to remember them.

"We've been working on this for four days. Today we have to finish it for those people whose dead were washed away by the floodwaters. At least they can light a candle here and offer flowers," said Ahaga.

A BOY looks at the place where the tomb of his sister used to be in Botolan, Zambales, before floodwaters destroyed it.

THIS SITE in Barangay San Antonio in Biñan, Laguna, was meant to be for a public cemetery until town officials decided privately should be given to the living, not the dead. Half of this land will become a catchment for flood evacuees.

He said a list of 40 names would be put in the shrine to remember those whose remains were never recovered by their relatives.

Ahaga said the recovered remains were transferred to "apartment-type" tombs in another section of the cemetery.

"Those can only accommodate bones... because those are so small," he said.

Mayor Magdalo Hay said these apartment-type tombs were given free to flood victims. "The last thing they need to think about is paying for these things. We also built a shrine so that they can offer prayers to their loved ones there, especially those who were never recovered," he said.

Hay, however, said the living have many problems to face as Botolan tries to recover from the impact of the worst typhoons.

"There is still so much reconstruction to do and so much relief efforts to undertake. That's where we are focused right now," he said.

"Everyone is hurting here, inside and out. We don't know what will happen to us. It looks like all our trials are not yet over," said Myrna Rafael, a resident of Barangay Carael.

"What really hurts the most is that even as you are miserable in the evacuation centers here, it just gets worse if your loved ones were washed away (by floodwaters). When everything else is taken from you, being with them (somehow eases the pain)," she said.

In Biñan, Laguna, what used to be government land meant for a public cemetery will have to give way to a relocation site for flood evacuees.

The three-hectare property in Barangay San Antonio in Biñan, Laguna, was originally intended to be the town's public cemetery.

But Mayor Len Alonte-Naguiat said the municipal government may have to use half of the property to house families displaced by flooding in the town.

Biñan was one of the worst-hit Laguna barrios hit by Tropical Storm Ondoy.

At least 2,800 families were displaced there.

The Laguna Lake Development Authority has said the floods won't subside until incumbent or newly sworn-in.

"We should prioritize the living," said Councilor Gan Alonte.

He said a community helped by donations from the Swiss Red Cross, will rise in the property.

The Swiss Red Cross is providing 150 barracks that can each house up to 10 families.

Naguiat said at least 1,500 families could be relocated to the site.

The construction of the barracks started last week and is expected to finish in the second week of November.

In Kidapawan City, the South Cotabato police office extended the days off of policemen as it declared a red alert status to concentrate solely on the observance of the All Souls' and All Saints' Days.

Supt. Jose Calimutan, deputy police director, said all policemen in the province were required to render duty on those days.

Calimutan said the undelivered policemen would also patrol cemeteries. SPO3 Lemuel A. Magbanua and Orlando Bitog, Jr., Spo2 er Mindanao and Marlon Cinco, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Not scary, ghosts live among us, Igorots believe

By Dakar Cariño
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—FOR the Igorots, these horror stories had made their town scary. But on tradition, these ghosts should not be feared. In fact, they should be treated like ordinary neighbors since they actually live with us only that they could not be seen.

Blessing Anchi and Jaime Colongan, two of Benguet's elders, said the province still pays homage to indigenous beliefs about ghosts.

These beliefs, both said, have remained intact and have become a unifying force for tankets to respect their elders and environment.

But Anchi, author of the book on "Treasury of Beliefs and Home Rituals of Benguet," said these beings should apply to called spirits than ghosts.

"A ghost refers to that which comes right after death while a spirit refers to that being that lives after death or away from the corners of existence," he said.

The Kankanaey called their ghosts "kalaw-ew" while the Ibaloi called them "anitan."

But one should not be afraid of them just like how they are portrayed in the movies, said Colongan, a retired Baguio councilor and a former Department of Education supervisor.

"In fact, most of them are friendly," he said.

Anchi, 70, is a Kankanaey from Bokod and Kibungan towns. Colongan, 63, is an Ibaloi who hails from Itogon town.

In separate interviews, both said today's younger generations of Igorots has misconceptions about ghosts.

They said Halloween movies about the dead or movies depicting "zombies" have altered the traditional concept about ghosts or spirits.

But how should one know that the ghosts are around?

It's easy because they do things to make their presence felt, Colongan said.

They knock on the door, open a closed window, move objects or appear in one's dreams, he said.

"If you are alone and these things happen, the ghosts are surely there. They want to get noticed because they are ashamed to appear right then and there. Do not be afraid. Talk to them. Ask them to come in and eat if they are hungry," he said.

"These ghosts or spirits live with us," Anchi said. "It's because indigenous beliefs do not speak of heaven and earth."

He said some ghosts could be bad because when they were still alive, they were really not good persons.

There are also native ghosts because they died under abnormal circumstances, like an accident, suicide or landslide, he said.

THE IMGURO City public cemetery is abuzz with activity as residents mark their annual trek to their dead loved ones. LOUIE BENCITO

Railway squatters get TRO from court

ROSAS CITY—Squatters on land formerly owned by the Philippine National Railways have got a reprieve from eviction after the Court of Appeals (CA) in Cebu City granted their request for a temporary restraining order (TRO) against the scheduled demolition of their homes.

In a three-page resolution dated October 28, the CA's 19th Division voted that it found the petitioners' prayer for the issuance of a temporary restraining order to be meritorious.

The squatters, through lawyer Ely Amarega, claimed that they were victims of the Old Law.

Amarega said most of the squatters have made improvements, with some owning multiple of them, in their homes.

On Monday, an emotion had to delay the demolition to prevent bloodshed after the squatters, who were armed with stone, steel and pieces of wood, put up barricades using tires and trucks. Alipio T. Cellan, Inquirer Visayas

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INQUIRER Mindanao

Volunteer doctors await peace, too

By Rose May de Guzman
Cotabato City

THE SINGING OF THE NATIONAL HYMN BY schoolchildren keeps almost in awe some of the organizers working in the midst of misery being suffered by hundreds of thousands of people living in shelter camps.

For them, the melody they hear every morning conveys the resilience of Filipinos never recounting from our battles in life.

Behind a primary school, the Médicos Sin Fronteras (Doctors without Borders) headquarters in the volatile Cotabato City stands, still optimistic despite dangers of a fragile child, a hungry mother, a struggling father and the elderly who silently await death in the evacuation centers, thanks to some expatriate doctors who care what many have overlooked—nothing at one person at a time in saving a life materially called to win.

One overcast Tuesday evening, three mobile clinics simultaneously prepare for takeoff to three camps across wide-area Maguindanao. Elizabeth Hoeltig, MSF field coordinator, lays down the action plan for a clinic being stationed in Poblacion and Bagan in Gen. Salipada K. Pendatun, Maguindanao.

"You're not going without us," Hoeltig assures the three clinicians, nine nurses and three midwives wearing the red-stained MSF vests.

Loads of medicines, mostly bottles of antibiotics, pain relievers, multivitamins and emergency therapeutic foods, are slid in boxes transported by four vehicles in a convoy along ruthless-cracked roads. Wearing these stuff ready allows the group to respond to urgent situations quickly," says Hoeltig, a former ER nurse in England.

"We have come here to act in response to the crisis, treating the most severe cases," she says. "But as we speak, there are more sprawling problems requiring a longer response."

The current situation is disturbing: Most "evacuees" now depend on external aid as the camps face a severe nutritional emergency with what most health officials place at more than 100,000 children at grave risk.

According to the National Disaster Coordinating Council, at least 330,140 people have been affected by the war between government and Moro rebel forces in the region. In Maguindanao alone, the number of those displaced has risen to 92,300 families a year after the fighting broke out.

Since it was elected by the national government in November last year, the MSF medical team has opened eight mobile clinic and makeshift a number of outpatient treatment programs.

Seven malnutrition has struck various camps, in nearly 11 months, more than 10,000 children, some of them severely malnourished, have received medical treatment, while a great number who have been suffering health complications needed to be brought to the hospital.

"Medical missions come in least twice a week to each location, providing immediate aid to children with measles prob-

THE CLAMOR for peace goes on. People displaced by the fighting hang placards calling for a stop to war at a national highway in Maguindanao.

lems, pregnant mothers and emergency cases, such as surgery, which we refer to hospitals," says Hoeltig.

For every child suffering disease acute malnutrition and vitamin deficiencies, therapeutic food and medical treatment are given.

Free health care

Almost skin and bones, Bombada Imamparan, at 28 months, only weighs 7.6 kilograms. "He was not like this before we ran for safety. His health has deteriorated since we arrived here," his mother Norsaida says.

The Imamparan have only spent a month in the Poblacion camp where they had sought refuge after fighting erupted on their village while most of the residents were observing Ramadan, the Islamic fasting month.

Inside a shack that serves as temporary clinic, the boy's deteriorating and lieutenant walking was also Hoeltig.

Alysa readily-to-eat therapeutic food, made primarily of peanut paste, milk and vitamin complex called Plumpy'nut, Mombada slept crying loudly, delighted at his bite. But the pain somewhere in his frail body seems to be the severest of the worst.

The MSF has been giving malnourished children high-energy biscuits and therapeutic food made with peanut paste to recover lost physical development. Most mothers discover that their children quickly gained weight within a few weeks.

"Without the correct amounts of basic nutrients in their diets, these children are susceptible to diseases. They are under threat of dying," says Hoeltig.

In another camp in Bagan in Gubatan-gan town, pregnant mother Sanjhi Jagjag their equally malnourished children queue for free prenatal check-ups and vitamins.

But it worsen in Dipiotan, Datu Piang, is not as looks as other mothers in the camps. With puffed eyes, yellowing skin and dreaming bones, Zainab Rajahmad looks sick. She has been diagnosed with schistosomiasis, a disease caused by parasitic blood flukes found in running water where the snails lodge in inside water like skin and attack the liver and other organs.

American doctor David Spencer, who is in the country for a six-month mission with MSF, has helped Zainab relieve the pain since she presented herself to him. But her illness is more on its late stage.

"There has been irreversible damage to her liver and spleen and she's extremely anemic," says Spencer. He is not giving up, though. "I am confident we can find ways to treat her through our hospital partners."

The 40-year-old woman with three school-aged children was one of the first students who evacuated the village of Gawang in Datu Saudi Ampatuan the day the wars broke out in August last year. Limited to her mind of the times her family evacuated their house, and she asks: "When can we go home?"

But now, Zainab is waging a different battle, but she is not going to surrender yet. "I have a land to cultivate. I want to grow old with my family by my side. I'm still young to just die here," she says with an unwavering.

MSF program

Founded by a group of French doctors and a group of journalists in 1971, the MSF (the Medici Sans Frontiers) awarded in 1999, has become a global aid organization delivering medical support to populations in danger. It provides services to everyone regardless of race, creed, country and religion, and is a politically impartial and neutral organization.

Having independent funding is essential to the MSF mission.

The group has been working in the Philippines since the 1980s, implementing medical programs in various areas. It left in 2005 and returned temporarily in November last year following the upsurge of fighting in Mindanao.

Ten expatriate doctors, nurses and logisticians from several countries and 50 local staff members provide inpatient care to eight evacuation centers in Datu Piang, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Guindulungan, Mamasapano and Datu Saudi Ampatuan, all in Maguindanao, and Pigcawayan in North Cotabato. Currently, the group is scouting for new places to serve.

The MSF Philippines has conducted over 30,000 checkups, treatment and disease prevention measures, which supplies vitamins to every member of the family as supplement to their normal diet.

Common illnesses besetting the population in camps are respiratory diseases, body pain, headaches, fever, diarrhea and injuries from petty accidents; a few children show signs of acute malnutrition.

Some cases of tuberculosis and measles are referred to hospitals in Cotabato City.

To improve sanitary conditions, the MSF has worked on drinking water and sewage systems, and has also provided drinking water to over 7,500 displaced people in Maguindanao.

When Maguindanao is under heavy artillery attacks by the government and rebel forces, residents are trapped inside, possibly. But hopes are up for the MSF to

> 'I have a land to cultivate. I want to grow old with my family by my side. I'm still young to just die here...'

last in the camps since the coast to peace is now open between the warring forces.

Expat doctors, nurses

"We'll be hanging around here until next summer. But we'll never know what's going to happen come election time," says Harding.

While other doctors and nurses work in two-day rotation, only a few sign up to labor in the most difficult conditions, such as conflict zones and disaster areas. Irena Bertrand Rosier is the head of Mission in the Philippines.

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Six Pampanga mayors clamor for GMA in House

From page A1

run for representative appeared on one of her visits to Lubao, the hometown of her late father, former President Diosdado Macapagal.

All six mayors of the second district reached yesterday by the Inquirer said they would support Ms Arroyo should she run for representative of her home district. The mayors were Dennis Pineda (Lubao), Edwardo Guevarra (Floridablanca), Rolando Rivera (Guagua), Rogelio Ilarina (Porac), Leonardo Minano (Bacolor) and Voltaire Pineda (Sto. Rosa).

Floridablanca Mayor Guevarra said he told Ms Arroyo about a previous urging her to run for Congress but did not get a categorical answer about her political plans.

"She just smiled at me when I told her alone she persuades encouraging her to run as representative of the second district," he said.

Ms Arroyo's frequent visits to the province this year—almost weekly, with some visits stretching for three days and most of them to towns in the second district—have led to speculation that she would seek the position now held by her son, Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo.

The President inspects and inaugurates government projects like school buildings, roads and water systems during her visits here. She also distributes relief goods, land titles, scholarship certificates and health cards to residents.

Governor said Ms Arroyo has not disclosed any of her political plans to local officials.

"But, by all means, we want her to run. Wouldn't you be pleased to have a (former) President in your district's representation in Congress?" he said.

Lubao Mayor Pineda said Ms Arroyo would serve the district well.

'Majority want her to run'

"I'll support PGMA (Ms Arroyo) 100 percent if she runs for representative because that means government projects will continue to pour in to the second district," he said.

Porac Mayor Ilarina said "majority of the people in the province want her to run."

While he has not talked Ms Arroyo about her political plans, he said "her body language [says] she will run."

"Maybe she's still hesitating she's legal impediments that could hinder (her bid) if ever she will run for Congress. That's why she's not stating her political plans yet," Ilarina said.

Guagua Mayor Rivera said he would push Ms Arroyo to run. "If only I could, I will push her to run as our representative. I think all mayors here would like her to run."

For his part, Sasmuan Mayor Velasco said he would support Ms Arroyo whenever she decides to run because she has a wide experience in public service.

Meanwhile, Santa Rita Mayor Pineda said: "If President Arroyo still wants to serve her scholars (townspeople), why can't?"

Lorelei Bajenio, deputy provincial spokesperson, said she would not want to second guess the President's political plans.

Focus on second district

"It's only the President who can say if she's running or not. We hardly talk about politics," Bajenio said.

Pampanga Gov. Eddie Panlilio, a critic of Ms Arroyo, said she has lost that the President spends a lot of time in the second district is evidence of her political plans.

"All indications that she will run are here. She's the President yet she's focusing on one district. Why are there lots of funds for the second district?" Panlilio noted.

He said other areas in Pampanga and other provinces have more problems than the second district.

Resign from presidency

Ron Fajardo, in an earlier interview, disputed Panlilio's claim. "The President has been going around the country and as long as other provinces are not neglected, there is nothing wrong if the President visits her hometown often," she said.

Panlilio said if Ms Arroyo still runs, she should resign from the presidency to be fair to other candidates.

"Who will run against her? Imagine, from president to congresswoman? Who will dare fight her?" he pointed out.

AFTER THE STORM President Macapagal-Arroyo points to the damaged houses in Cagayan, Arroyo to Naguilian, Tagaytay City, during a visit on Saturday with Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap.

Earlier, Randy David, a sociology professor at the University of the Philippines, had said he would not against Ms Arroyo if she enters the congressional race in Pampanga's second district. On Friday, David said he is backing out if Ms Arroyo will not step down from the presidency when she files her certificate of candidacy by Nov. 30.

New politics by 'irritation,' according to Nicanor Perlas

Pampanga At

It also speaks of the Philippines' ongoing "inner process of transformation" to be able to "live up again amidst the challenges," he said.

Speaking with bayanan solon last week, the 59-year-old activist-environmentalist said that as he had declared in June, he would seek the highest elective post in the country and nothing else.

And so, Perlas said, he was not considering running for a lower post, such as senator. He pointed out that the Philippines already had good laws, and that the challenge was to implement them properly.

Malacañang is the problem

"The disease of our system is in the presidential level. The national branch is the source of all our problems," he said.

Perlas also said that while he was not in unwillingness or so swamped as the other presidential aspirants, he was not quite ready for now.

He said that "yellow fever" triggered by the death on Aug. 1 of former President Corazon Aquino and now renewed on her only son was ignoring "the discernment process that is needed at this time."

Perlas said that while he had attended closely with then President Aquino, he must her son only once, and recently: it was Noynoy who, in a customary manner, handed to him the Manuel L. Quezon award for Exemplary Governance for his environment work.

"WE ARE ALL FILIPILS" Tito's the slogan of presidential aspirant Nicanor Perlas which is a play on his surname, he tells Inquirer editors at the Inquirer Office in Makati City Tuesday night.

New politics

Pampanga Gov. Ed Panlilio, who declared he would run for president a week before Perlas' own declaration in June, has expressed support for Noynoy Aquino.

Isabela Gov. Grace Padaca, who was being pushed by her supporters to also seek the presidency, is now also backing Aquino, being a member of the Liberal Party.

But Perlas said: "It is not clear where Noynoy will land in. There is no discussion of any platform."

In reiterating his intention to run for president, he said there was a need for "new politics" to replace the "personality-driven" traditional politics.

"The popular person may not always be the best," he said.

He has does not count among the presidential aspirants ranking impressively in the surveys, like Aquino. But the president said election is still six months away and "a lot of things can happen," he pointed out.

"If people will hear me personally, I believe support will be overwhelming," Perlas said.

He said voters should study his platform, which is based on six pillars—eradicating poverty, minimizing corruption and promoting sound governance, stopping environmental destruction, introducing participatory governance, promoting creative education, and encouraging homegrown and other good practices.

Green candidacy

Perlas' presidential campaign color will be green. But is will be a broader vision of a "green candidacy," he said, adding:

"Green is not just about the environment. It is also about economic, political, material, human and spiritual issues. Genuine change is a green issue, but jumpstarting for disaster is also important."

Perlas' name may not be familiar to most Filipinos, but he has executive experience in government service, as well as involvement in the peace process in Mindanao.

He was active in the opposition to the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant that was built through Westinghouse power during the Marcos regime of President Ferdinand Marcos. His stance earned him death threats that forced him to flee to the United States and stay there for about a decade.

Perlas returned to the Philippines after the fall of the Marcos dictatorship and served as consultant of the Presidential Commission on the Philippine Nuclear Power Plant and of the Philippine Council of Sustainable Development under Presidents Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos, respectively.

He was also part of the cabinet-in-exile group that helped oust President Joseph Estrada in 2001 and that called for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo at the height of the "Hello Garci" election fraud scandal in 2005.

Internet power

But for all his accomplishments, Perlas is even known using advertisements of himself on television.

"I don't believe in infomercials," he declared.

While infomercials may be illegal, "there violates the spirit of the law," and those who have been spending on TV ads "disqualify their propensity to hand the law," he said.

Instead, Perlas is banking on the reach of the Internet.

He maintains a website, www.nicanorperlas.com, where his articles, credentials and speaking round can be viewed.

Perlas' name may not be familiar to most Filipinos, but he has executive experience in government service, as well as involvement in the peace process in Mindanao.

He was active in the opposition to the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant that was built through Westinghouse power during the Marcos regime of President Ferdinand Marcos. His stance earned him death threats that forced him to flee to the United States and stay there for about a decade.

Perlas returned to the Philippines after the fall of the Marcos dictatorship and served as consultant of the Presidential Commission on the Philippine Nuclear Power Plant and of the Philippine Council of Sustainable Development under Presidents Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos, respectively.

He was also part of the cabinet-in-exile group that helped oust President Joseph Estrada in 2001 and that called for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo at the height of the "Hello Garci" election fraud scandal in 2005.

Internet power

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Fighting corruption

Perlas said that although he comes from a well-to-do family, he chose to study agriculture at the Xavier University in Cagayan de Oro because he wanted to work closely with the poor.

His father, Jesus Perlas, was general manager of the National Waterworks and Sewerage Authority (Nawasa) during the Marcos regime.

Marcos tried to corrupt his father, and when the latter resisted, the dictator slapped him with a trumped-up corruption case, according to Perlas.

A "radicalized" his and international him in student activism, his said, adding that it was the why fighting corruption would be one of his priorities if he gets elected to president.

Perlas said he would make the Office of the President as transparent as possible to stem off budget and expenses. He said he would also oppose an anti-corruption case.

The advocacy will begin in his presidential campaign. He will only shell out a maximum of P2 million from his own pocket for his campaign.

The bulk of the funds will come from donations from fellow activists and in his platform.

Big businesses are welcome to support him financially, but they will be reminded that they will be supporting "not an individual, but a vision."

Perlas made it clear "If I am elected, there will be no chinese."

Because of a shoe, a province was won by Grace

Pampanga At

two made for her small size if feet. Doctors turned emotional.

"I have told the people of Isabela that they may not realize it, but Gerard has done so much for our province," she said. "These shoes have made it so much easier for me to visit remote cores and dole fields in the barangay, inspect our ongoing road construction projects and even get into drainages to survey damages wrought by typhoons and floods."

Once a year, Padaca delivers her state-of-the-province address standing on her own two wobbly feet for 90 minutes, a feat made possible because of her orthopedic shoes.

Another mission

Last February, Van Riel and his wife, Ada, (pronounced Eeka) were chosen around Isabela by the governor herself. Van Riel had retired from his job in an orthopedic shoe factory in Gouwsluis, in 2008, and embarked on a sentimental journey to Isabela, where the governor is like a daughter to fitmood herself.

Van Riel also had another mission: To measure Padaca's feet for another pair of orthopedic shoes he was making for her from his retirement benefits.

"It would be my third pair of custom shoes," Padaca said. A pair of orthopedic shoes could cost about a thousand euros, or about P68,700.

"It's expensive, but it can last years, even a lifetime," she added.

How to make shoes

Padaca said when Van Riel comes back, he will teach Filipinos how to make orthopedic shoes. She said it had all been arranged with the Philippine Orthopedic Hospital.

"He will stay for three months and will teach us free," she added.

Afflicted with polio at age 5, the 46-year-old former radio broadcaster said she had always depended on the kindness and prudence of cousins for her mobility.

"Whenever I studied or worked, a cousin would be there in the classroom or office, as my human crutch," she said.

That was the arrangement when she was a student at the Lyceum of the Philippines, where she graduated magna cum laude in 1981, and at the Radyo Bombo in Cauayan, Isabela, where she blazed a trail as a hard-hitting radio announcer from 1986 to 2000.

Trip to Netherlands

Soon after she quit broadcasting, Padaca was sent by the diocese of Ilagan to join a group of nuns on a trip to a sister parish in the diocese of Groningen, which covers the provinces of Friesland, Drenthe and North East Polder, all in The Netherlands. As fate would have it, she stayed at the house of Van Riels, who are from Friesland.

At the time, Padaca said she was already learning how to walk with crutches, a gift from a donor friend who disapproved of Padaca's dependence on a human crutch.

She said her problem was finding the right shoes to fit her curved feet.

If the shoes fit

"I've learned that therapy could have saved my legs, but we didn't know that then," Padaca said soberly.

Hearing this Riel changed all that, she said, beaming.

"He measured my feet, then made a mold that fit every curve. We had a fitting, and then a re-fitting. It takes a little time," she explained.

Thanks to donations, Padaca now has five custom shoes made by Van Riel in 2008. He made her a second pair soon after she was elected governor in 2004.

JUST'S OF WALKING For three decades, Governor Padaca (left) had bought shoes from the children's department and orthopedic shoemaker Gerard van Riel (right) custom-made her first orthopedic shoes in 2000.

IF THE SHOE FITS: Isabela Gov. Grace Padaca has her feet measured by orthopedic shoemaker Gerard van Riel of the Netherlands who visited her last February.

With Ondoy, Pepeng, it was rain; with Santi, it's wind

By DJ Yap

BAGUIO, TUBAO, BENGUET PROVINCE BELOW, It's the wind.

Strong winds brought by Typhoon "Santi" tore through a Mondale community in Tuba on town yesterday, ripping roofs, uprooting trees, and whipping up a torrent of waves and water lilies that swept the residents away.

For the second time in five weeks, Purok 8 of Lupang Arcenda, a makeshift community of 4,000 people still reeling from the onslaught of Storm "Ondoy," was plunged into despair.

"It's like we're being punished. The hardship just keeps coming," said Mariano de Quiroz, a father of three. "With Ondoy, it was the rain. Now, it's the wind."

As many as 1,000 victims of Ondoy who had built temporary shelters on the 50-hectare stretch of land by Laguna de Bay now have to start from scratch.

There had not been much rain, but the wind was so strong it caused the lake waters to crash into the reclaimed dike on which the shanties were established, residents said.

This was how Purok 8 chair Erlinda Nacino described last Friday's visit.

"We heard the wind howling. Then the lake receded by about two feet. Then the waves came back.

"The water lilies came with the waves, and everything was swept away like a tsunami."

Upside down

Like many other fathers, De Quiroz, 44, had left his wife and children in the nearby evacuation center and hitched the typhoon to protect the family possessions.

"It came to a point when we were hanging on to the roofs to keep them from being blown away," he recalled.

Cherry Deleña, 24, a mother of three, said she spent the night with her husband and children at the evacuation center. When they returned to check on their homes, they were shocked to find it upside down.

Barangay Brgy. San Gumilid Ernesto Aquino said the waves and the water lilies there carried kept pounding at the disaster, many of which were dragged by the current.

A whole house was yanked several meters away with the family still inside, Amelia Dimmalled. Rescuers on rubber boats eventually led them to safety, she said.

The vanishing of children echoed through the dawn and early morning as the waters subsided, Dio said.

Submerged

By early morning, residents were picking through what was left of their homes.

Some houses were submerged with only the roofs protruding from the swamp-riddled with water lilies and debris.

Pleasant," galvanized iron doors, wood planks and all sorts of furniture were strewn about everywhere.

"We want to rebuild, but we don't have the materials. We want to leave but we have nowhere to go. We want to return to the provinces, but we have no boats to go back to," lamented Elgera Baste, 51.

'No more'

Tuyabay Mayor Jobic Sarcia said as many as 1,000 families had lost their homes.

But announcing he all there will have to wait as the town prepares for the evacuation of more residents. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

The mayor said that despite the repeated violations from the community, Purok 8 "will be no more."

"We'll dismantle everything. We won't allow anyone to build here anymore," he said.

Lupang Arenda, with a population of 20,000, is composed of eight areas (or "puroks").

Purok 1-7 also regularly experience flooding, but Purok 8 is traditionally hit hardest.

Fast, furious 'Santi' hits Metro, southern Luzon; 11 dead

Inquirer AI

"We see no reason for the storm to slow down or come back," Uno said, adding that storm signals had been lowered.

But at least 11 persons were reported killed and seven others reported missing when the typhoon pounded the Bicol and Calabarzon regions before quickly sweeping through the metropolis.

In Batangas, a father and his son were missing after flood waters caused a bridge connecting two barangays collapsed yesterday morning.

Supt. Manuel Abu, Batangas City police chief, identified the missing as Romulo Soriano, 61, and his 5-year-old son.

As of 6:30 p.m. yesterday, the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC) reported only minor casualties. Four dead, one injured and four missing.

But reports gathered by the Inquirer from local military police and disaster officials showed that typhoon-related casualties continued to rise.

A BRIDGE TOO FAR Suddenly, the villages of Kumintang Ibaba and Gulod Labac in Batangas City are worlds apart after the midsection of the bridge connecting the two villages collapsed on Saturday morning from the force of floodwaters triggered by Typhoon "Santi." A family of three in a white Honda Civic was reported missing in the "Bridge of Promise," which collapsed around 7:30 a.m. MARIANNE BERMUDEZ

LPA approaching

After today's good weather, parts of northern and Central Luzon could experience occasional rain showers and cloudy skies beginning Monday because of an approaching low-pressure area (LPA), Pagasa announced.

Uno said the LPA, located just outside the Philippine area of responsibility west of the country, would interact with the northeast monsoon to bring more rains.

He said there was a low possibility that the low-pressure area would develop into a tropical cyclone.

Still, Pagasa cautioned improved weather conditions today to mean that here the issue of Santi's fury—the Bicol region, and Central Luzon including Cavite, Laguna, Batangas and Rizal, and Metro Manila.

"People who still want to go to connecting cities still do so on Sunday," he said, adding that any rain showers in Luzon would not be due to Santi.

Floods

Parts of Laguna—Calamba City and the towns of Pagsanjan, Sta. Cruz, Bay, Victoria, Liliw and Pila—were reported flooded as Santi crossed the province.

Pagasa's Uno said the flooding could have been caused by the heavy rains that further raised the water level at Laguna Lake.

The water level at the lake was already high as a result of the rains brought by Tropical Storm "Ondoy" on Sept. 26.

Senior Supt. Marcelino Latandoc, police chief of Laguna, said Mingle Tadeo, 6, and Julivia Zapanta, 79, drowned in separate flash floods in Magsanjan, and Edsel Cardeña, 12, drowned in Pangil in Liliw.

A jet reinforcement man was reported missing after his jeep was swept away by flood waters in Liliw, according to Siemon Fontanilla, Calabarzon Regional Disaster Coordinating Council director.

In the Bicol region, Rafly Alejandro of the Office of Civil Defense said seven persons died of various circumstances in Camarines Norte and Catanduanes.

The Army's 2nd Infantry Division also reported that one of its troops was killed in Albay when a tree fell on him while crossing a creek in Pilillo, Bicol.

The missing persons include one in Montalvan City, one in Bicol, three in Pila, Laguna, and two in Batangas City.

According to the NDCC, floods forced some 116,000 persons to flee their homes.

Evacuations

The NDCC spokesperson, Lt. Col. Francis Pasiwen, said 22,181 families displaced by the floods had been taken to 251 evacuation centers as of 12 noon yesterday.

Town said Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro traveled to Sta. Cruz, Laguna, to check on the conditions of the residents and the damage wrought on public infrastructure.

He said the NDCC and the military had sent disaster relief teams to the affected areas and distributed relief goods two days before Santi made landfall.

In Cavite City, 979 persons were evacuated, said Senior Supt. Alfred Corpuz, Cavite police director.

Around 4,437 persons (or 1,116 families), mostly living in high-risk areas, were evacuated to safe grounds in Quezon.

According to Jay dela Fuente, chief of Manila's social welfare office, families living in low-lying areas were evacuated from their homes at around 9 p.m. on Friday.

Some 1,300 families from Parola and Isla Puting Bato in Tondo, were taken to the Del Pan Sports Complex, and 400 families from the Baseco Compound to the covered court and the Gonzalo Puyat Elementary School.

Dela Fuente said rains were expected at around 9 a.m. yesterday, allowing residents to quickly repair loosened galvanized iron roofs and city government workers to cut down trees blocking the roads.

Power outages

Strong and strong winds brought by Santi toppled electric posts, causing power outages in Camarines Norte, Quezon, Bicol, Laguna and Metro Manila.

In Manila itself, commuters were forced to find other means of transport when the Light Rail Transit suspended its operations due to a power outage.

About 1.6 million or 33 percent of the 4.6 million registered customers of the Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) remained without power as of 1:8 a.m. yesterday.

"Felled trees, downed poles and wires, damaged electrical equipment and other debris that hit our facilities were the reasons behind the outages," said Meralco external communication manager Joe Zaldarriaga.

But Meralco said it expected to fully restore power supply to all affected areas by today.

"Based on field reports we are receiving, we expect to restore a total of normalcy by Sunday," said Meralco assistant vice president Abe Evangelista.

Stranded

According to the NDCC's Pasiwen, 8,567 passengers of commercial ships were stranded and more than 100 sea vessels were forced to seek refuge in various ports in Calabarzon and Bicol because of Santi.

About 7,000 passengers were stranded in various ports of Luzon and the Visayas, the Philippine Coast Guard said.

In a report submitted to the Coast Guard said 7,847 passengers remained stranded in Southern Tagalog, Bicol, Metro Manila, Western Visayas and Central Eastern Visayas.

Adm. Wilfredo Tamayo, the Coast Guard chief, said the number was expected to decline as he had ordered the resumption of interisland ferry services in Batangas, Manbato, Nieves Espinosa Albay.

Long lines of vehicles coming from Bicol and Manila were stranded in Atimonan, Quezon, because of flooding on the Maharlika Highway.

Chief Insp. Alain Baby Constantino, Atimonan police chief, said the motorists had been stranded in the roadside "mompasa of Sandalan, Mahinan, Tinambac and Tagbakin since 2 a.m. yesterday after the flooding rose swiftboard and spilled onto the highway.

With reports from Tina G. Santos, Kristine L. Alave and Amy R. Remo in Manila; Belito T. Abad, Jr. in Legazpi; Jenner Chica, Jessup Cebilla, Subito, Juan Facundo Jr., Mariah Bilbo Landia and Ronnie O. Perez, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Like 'Milenyo'

THE SYMBOLIC WINDS AND heavy rains brought by Santi gave Ramon Villon of Brgy. 14, Manila, a sense of déjà vu.

"It was like experiencing 'Milenyo' all over again. Of course, Milenyo was a lot worse, but hearing the roof creak really scared me. That's the same feeling I had when Milenyo struck," Villon said of the strong typhoon that directly hit Metro Manila in 2006.

During that time, their roof flew off, Villon said. "Thank God no such thing happened this time."

Santi's strong winds toppled trees, including one at the corner of Quezon's Street in Jose Abad Santos, blocking motorists bound for the Norte and Bicutan area and causing heavy traffic.

Another big tree at the old, dried playground in front of the Manila Zoo and Botanical Garden was also uprooted and thrown against electrical wires.

In 10-10 Tondo, an electric post toppled, causing a power outage.

Some areas in Manila, particularly on Espacio and Tell Avenues, were left in ankle-deep floodwaters.

A few people braved the inclement weather to visit their dearly departed at the Manila North Cemetery.

"I was at first reluctant to visit the tomb of my husband, but I realized that this is just a once-a-year occasion. So we came here despite the typhoon," said Nora Pamelen, who came on the cemetery with her three children as early as 6 a.m.

"Paid bardos we want to avoid the big crowd [on Sunday]," she said.

At 3:30 p.m., police announced the ground at the 54-hectare cemetery at 50,000 individuals.

"People flocked here as soon as the weather improved," said Supt. Generoso Tendero, chief of the Manila Police Department station 3.

RP team wins 25 medals in math tilt in India; places 2nd

Inquirer AI

an Reginald Jy of St. Jude Catholic School in Manila, Timothy James Tan from Trinity Christian School, Bacolod, Negros Occidental, and Mohamad Nasir Ang of Xavier School in San Juan, Metro Manila.

The fourth gold was won by Philippines Team B, composed of Lara Andrea Monsales from College San Agustin in Makati, Andrew Lawrence Yu from St. Jude Catholic School, Dasmariñas.

The silver medalists were Trisha Nicole Anan of Naga Hope Christian School, Naga, Camarines Sur; James Daniel Cordero and Angela Gabriel Llamas, Perpetual Soccorsky, Muntinlupa; Wilbert Lee Tan and Beth Brian Yeoh of St. Jude Catholic School; and Lee Emmanuel Sombito, Salesians Integrated School de Bosco, Bacolo City.

Philippine Teams A, C, D and E took one silver medal each in the team competitions.

The bronze medalists were Mark Davidson Cua of Pangasinan University Institute, Dagupan City; and Jose Ramon Sevilla, College-Salesiano, Muntinlupa; Emmanuel Andrew Peña of La Salle Greenhills, San Juan; Joseph Mc Francis de Leon, Mount Lights International Christian School, Naga; Zac Tyrone Sioh, ABC Learning Center, Dumaguete City.

Jarred Bellazon of St. Mary's College, Quezon City; Paul Carlo Sulite, City Central School, Cagayan de Oro City; Shawn Gabrielle Cabanos, Zamboanga Chong Hua High School, Zamboanga City; Andrew Lanuevo Su, and Luis Andrea Montalvo.

The Math teams from South Africa, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Taiwan failed to show up during the one-day contest because of the SCHOOL virus scare," according to a contest official.

Jubilwell dare

Ed Melitejo, spokesperson for the Department of Foreign Affairs, commended the Filipino members were for a job well done.

"You made your schools and country proud with your achievements. Your significant victory reaffirms that our young minds wizards can rank among the very best," Melitejo said in a text message to the members of the Philippine math team.

The team was trained by the Mathematics Trainers' Guild-Philippines (MTG), a nonprofit that aims to promote excellence in Math education in the Philippines.

Dr. Simon Chua, the MTG president and cofounder, led the delegation to the Lucknow event, which was hosted by City Montessori School (CMS), a brand member for peace education.

The Math competition is one of more than 20 International events hosted each year by the Lucknow-based CMS (student population: 37,000), which was founded in 1959 by educators Jagdish Gandhi and his wife, Dr. Bharti Gandhi.

In its 2007 Warsaw, the Philippine team won 12 medals.

According to Chua, the Mexico "provides another opportunity for young Math wizards worldwide to gather and display their remarkable mathematical skills."

One of the Mission's goal is to bring out the best from every participant, he said.

"It is an experience also helps to promote world peace and unity, said Chua.

"This small circle of Math wizards and young wizards are not just doing great things for the improvement of math education but also is understanding each other," he said.

Chua invited the Winner participants to the Philippine International Math Competition, scheduled for later this month in Cebu City.

Some 22 countries have confirmed their participation to the contest, including China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, Indonesia, Thailand, Nigeria, Bhutan, Iran, South Africa, Brunei, Vietnam, Malaysia, Cyprus, Romania and South Korea.

MATH WIZARDS Team the Philippines show their medals and raise the second place trophy at the Mathematics International Competition in Lucknow, India. SONY SUMARAN

Eagles, Lady Falcons bag cage crowns

STENIO AMI ADAMSON PROVED ITS dominance in college basketball is not limited to the UAAP.

Hardly showing any championship hangover, the Blue Eagles dumped St. Francis of Assisi College, Inc. Friday to retain their men's basketball title in the 14th University Games before a huge crowd in Pittsburgh, Bulacan.

In a rematch of the UAAP finals, the Lady Falcons regained over the Eastern U, 79-77, in overtime behind the heroics of Hal Sandoli and Pita Bernardino.

Ateneo posted a seven-game sweep en route to its only title in the event's Games One of those victories came against UAAP rival Far Eastern U in the semifinals.

The victory in women's basketball allowed Adamson to finish the week-long games with two titles, matching the seven-golden.

University of Santo Tomas grabbed its fourth men's title after the Tigresses nipped La Salle, 1-0, for its second women's football crown in three years at the Rizal Stadium.

Olympic powerhouse West Negros University took the tennis football crown with a 2-0 drubbing of St. Bernilde in the finals at the Central Philippine University field.

WNU was just the third non-Manila team to wrest title in this year's edition of the games.

All told, the Big City schools captured a total of 20 crowns with UST, Mapúa Technological University and St. Bernilde winning four apiece.

Gold/P Rapos

2 HANDS UP Rubio (center) will be among those who St. Bernilde will survive against UP

SHAKEY'S V-LEAGUE
UP, St. Benilde in crucial duel

By Gold/P Rapos

THE SALE FOR THE LAST QUARTERFINAL berth heats up today as St. Benilde clashes with winless University of the Philippines in the Shakey's V-League Season 6 second conference at the FIBA Flying V Arena.

Toting a 1-4 card, the Lady Fighting Maroons are looking to secure at least a playoff for the No. 6 seed to capture a UP squad bottoming on the brink of elimination. The Lady Maroons remain winless in five games this Lyceum.

Converting it at 2 p.m. with St. Benilde boosted by the return of skipper Gwa Tumang and ace hitter Bea Agoncillo.

The duo are coming off a stint in the UniCamera in Iloilo City.

Clashing in the second game at 4 p.m. are San Sebastian and Ateneo Cheaters.

The Lady Stags and the Lady Eagles raced through the quarterfinals with straight-set victories over Lyceum and St. Benilde, respectively last Friday.

San Sebastian, the reigning NCAA champion, is seeking a fourth win in four games, while Ateneo tries to improve on its 3-2 mark.

The Lady Stags and the Lady Eagles received performances from the experienced quartet of Joy Benito, Marjorie Pefiño, Melissa Vinzuel and guest player Aiza Maslog.

Benito delivered crucial hits against the Lady Pirates and finished with 18 points.

Ateneo will counter with young hitters Pille Calaguio, Angeline Gervacio, Denise Acevedo, Bea Pascual and guest player Dhan Soriano. Calaguio had her breakout game of the conference against St. Benilde, finishing with 15 points.

The return of Tumang and Agoncillo gives the Lady Blazers additional options on the attack, which proved to be their weakness in the 25-22, 25-13, 25-19 loss to the Lady Eagles last Friday.

No player scored in double figures for the Lady Cheaters with guest player Roxanne Sujanda scoring up with a team-best nine points. Ibarmine Tebo and Kirsy Hontiveros are also hoping to bounce back from sub-par performances.

Loyola-ATR blanks Global XI, notches 1st win

A FIERY SECOND-HALF PERFORMANCE powered Loyola-ATR Kinding past Global-Manufacturing, 3-0, for its first victory in the LBC-UFL Cup-at-bottom pitch recently.

Loyola teamed on goals by Eddy Mercenon, Alvin Ardonio and Darwin Bernardo to keep into the victory column after bowing to Army-Pilmico, 5-0, last Oct. 18.

Army whitewashed Builders Garden, 1-0, to stay on top of Group B. The win also assured the Antiyanes of a berth in the quarterfinals.

Mat ensured ATR on the NBA runners, dropping home from just inside the box after receiving a cross from Pedro Machilovic.

The diminutive Valeroso, a former mem-

ber of the national team, doubled the lead from the penalty spot seven minutes later after he was fouled by the Global keeper to side the foot.

Wenceslao's driving header off an indirect free kick from Gino Tongson completed the scoring.

Alphone Bider also kept in top spot in Group C with a 4-2 victory over Lizon Alaska FC.

Union-Rudy Project FC, which was held to a scoreless draw by Lions d'Iloilo last Oct. 11, blanked Marine Affairs to pick up its second two points.

Kaya-Olympian continued its undefeated run in Group D with a 5-3 thumping of Mendiola 1Casters.

A first-half hat trick by Stefanos striker Bambito H. Bahleh put the Kaya hostess on their way to their second victory.

Yannick Tuason broke the ice for Kaya in the 9th minute, before El Bahleh, who scored twice in the 3-0 victory over Stanmak on opening-day attack in the 28th, 48th, and 90th minutes to give Kaya a 4-0 lead at the break.

Vaughn Melendres, Blink Aston Flores and Jerome Orevilla homed in the goals for Mendiola.

Stanmak bounced back with a 1-0 triumph over Manila All-Japan Elaine to stay at Gold's quarterfinal spot.

Gold/P Rapos

Top hitters eye World Series breakout

PHILADELPHIA—SOME OF baseball's biggest hitters will be hoping a change of venue will help get them going as the World Series heads to Philadelphia for Game four tomorrow.

Alex Rodriguez is 0 for 8 with six strikeouts in his first World Series. Mark Teixeira's only hit in seven at-bats is a solo homer.

"I feel pretty good, I mean, it's only been eight at-bats, but I felt like I've had a lot of good swings," Rodriguez said Friday.

Without any offense from either, the New York Yankees and Philadelphia Phillies have split the first two games and will shed out a split at home. Now, the series shifts to Philadelphia, with Cole Hamels set to start for the Phillies against fellow lefty Andy Pettitte.

AP

Costly wushu oversight

I WANTED TO WRITE ABOUT ghosts and other spooky stuff (sportsmen) by popular sports personalities like I always do on this time of the year.

But this time I was spooked by hundred. No one, it seems, had scary, spine-tingling supernatural tales to tell anymore.

Like the near-death experience recounted by Tinsley's Sonny Boyet years ago while on a picnic with his family at a beach resort. Sonny "saw" his entire life flash before his eyes as he was drowning.

Sonny lived to tell the tale, although he died of a heart attack after playing golf some years later. The incident had changed his entire perspective of death and when it was time for him to go, he did not harbor fears of the unknown.

* * *

But might have heard this from me before but I don't mind relating the experience of RGJU sends Dindo Pumanen a second time. Dindo was driving along Katipunan bridge late one night when he happened to glance at his rear view mirror. To his horror, he saw the image of a young boy in the back seat right behind him.

Dindo shut his eyes tightly, hoping the specter would go away. When he slowly opened them again, the boy was still there!

Dindo stopped on the gas, looking straight ahead of him. By later said the whole.

If I'm not mistaken, it was also on the Katipunan bridge that football player Chris Mendiet figured in a vehicular accident that killed him. For all we know, Chris could have seen the boy ghost too.

* * *

Since we're on the subject of ghosts, I wonder if the new occupants of the former PBA office at the PSC Complex are also being haunted by mysterious entities.

I was a witness when the office was converted by a famous ghostbuster who confirmed that the place was indeed inhabited by menacing spooks. The spooks disappeared when the PBA moved to its present office in Libis, Quezon City.

* * *

Did you know that weightlifters are also required to make results exams?

I only found this out recently after the Filipino contingent in the recent 15th Manila World Championship in Toronto, Canada, was not allowed to participate for arriving late for the weigh-in, which is required in the timeshow event.

Only one athlete, Stephanie Agbay, was able to compete. Tesda, where she finished 10th, did not require a weigh-in.

It was a waste of time, money and effort but no one blamed the NSA since it was the association that shouldered all the expenses.

Insiders said the costly oversight never happened before. Tan Si Ling, who led the SF group in Toronto, is one of two new presidents elected by the federation. The other is Tai Gaos.

* * *

HOOPVIEW: Best wishes to Ateneo Bull team manager Joy Llanos Dee and his bride, the former Stephanie Yu. Joy and Steph recently tied the knot at the San Sebastian Church with former President Joseph Estrada, Benito Bull owner George Chua, and mother Lily Ilusorio as among the principal sponsors. ... My condolences to Lambert Ilustre whose wife Vilma passed away recently after a lingering illness. Her remains lie in state at the Della Strada funeral in Katipunan.

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Website: www.inquirer.net/sports

Editor Tokkypriz S. Melendrez

Sunday SPORTS

Celtics still perfect; Mavs stop Lakers

BOSTON—THE BOSTON CELTICS HANDED the Chicago Bulls, 120-90, on Friday to maintain their unbeaten start to the new NBA season.

Paul Pierce and Eddie House each scored 22 points while Nate Robinson added 20 as the Celtics improved to 5-0.

The meeting was a rematch of the epic seven-game series between the teams in the first round of last year's playoffs.

Boston outscored the Bulls 67-44 over the second and third quarters to seize control.

"We've had the down-two defense and offensively took our time," Allen told reporters. "When we have time bench playing well, it takes a lot of pressure off of us and other teams don't know where our attack is coming from. We definitely like the way we look right now."

Rookie Noah had 16 points and 10 rebounds and Antawn Dorgis had 15 points for the Bulls, who appeared sluggish in their second game in as many nights.

Jason Kidd had 16 points for the Celtics as he continues his comeback from a knee injury that forced him to miss 25 games including the playoffs last year.

In Minneapolis, LeBron James scored 28 points and had nine rebounds and six assists for Cleveland to avoid his first 0-3 start in five years as the Cavaliers routed the Minnesota Timberwolves, 104-87.

Mo Williams added 20 points, Zydrunas Ilgauskas had 11 of his 13 points in the first half and Daniel Gibson drained three 3-pointers during a 7-minute stretch of the fourth quarter.

In Los Angeles, Dirk Nowitzki scored 33 points as the Dallas Mavericks shot 20 of 32 from the free throw line to overpower the Lakers, 94-88, for their first win of the season.

Nowitzki made 18 of 21 from the line and grabbed 11 rebounds. Shawn Marion added 16 points and Jason Terry 15 to end the Mavs' six-game losing streak against the defending NBA champions.

Kobe Bryant led the Lakers with 20 points and Andrew Bynum had 14 points and 10 rebounds.

In other NBA games, Philadelphia defeated Milwaukee, 99-86; Charlotte nipped New York in overtime, 102-100; Atlanta turned back Washington, 100-89; Miami routed Indiana, 94-83; Memphis edged Toronto, 115-107; Orlando topped New Jersey, 98-85; New Orleans brought down Sacramento, 97-92; Oklahoma City romped Detroit, 91-83; Utah whipped the LA Clippers, 111-98; and Phoenix crushed Golden State, 125-104. Reuters, AP

THE BOSTON Celtics get a big game from Rajon Rondo.

PCA: Lagman, Mendoza bag division titles

By Mari Anthony Reyes

FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD JACOB LAGMAN crowned a big win in the age group divisions when he outlasted third seed Ernesto Pineda, 6-1, 4-3, yesterday to win the boys' 16-under singles title of the Philippine Columbian Association (PCA) Open tennis junior championships.

The prized foe from Cebu City, who sustained his way past older and more seasoned rivals, earlier banged into the finals with a standout 6-2, 6-4 triumph over second seed Alberto Alfonso in the semifinals.

After falling victim to Lagman's onslaught, seen Art Frederick (8-2, 6-2) in the quarterfinals, and Dario Carlo Cinco (6-0, 6-0) in the second round.

Also grabbing the spotlight was 13-year-old Jazmine Jessica Mendoza, who capped his domination of the 14-under division by downing Andre Bautista, 6-3, 6-0, in the finals.

The third-seeded Mendoza, who is taking a crack at the men's open of the PCA, which starts in two weeks, got going by ousting John Hadaj, 6-0, 6-1, to reach the quarterfinals.

Mendoza eliminated John Maverick Vicinity, 6-1, 6-1, in the quarters before joining Mho-Allen Reyes, 6-1, 6-2, in the final four.

Carlos rules Faldo jungolf tourney by 9 strokes

SAN PEDRO, LAGUNA—JOSEPH CARLOS completed his impressive stint in unfamiliar territory with a second sub-par round, shooting a one-under 71 to walk away with the overall title in the 36th Isetan Philippine Championship at the SM Philippine Golf Club course here.

The Impostorchild Cardos carried the momentum of a brilliant three-under 69 start into the final round and tampered to a nine-under overall win in the 36-hole event that featured the country's top jungolfers and 18 local, four under over-up-and-down score.

In the Under 18 division champion, Carlos finished far ahead of Ulito dela Pen, Brent Sumampong, Regino de Guzman and Irina Galama who earned the other slots depicted best for next year's Nikki Arrien Grand Final at the Mission Hills Golf Club in Dongguan, China.

Jerald Pan claimed the boys Under 16 title by three strokes over Cebu bet Angelo Gandionco with a 74-149 while Sumampong (77-156) edged hosts Villeno for the boys Under 12 plum.

De Guzman and Galama finished 1-2 in the girls division, De Guzman scored 75-149 while Galama rallied with a 74-150.

Atty. Edna Perez, president of INF Philippines, and now Jungolf Foundation of the Philippines president Luigi Taberna handed the qualifiers their trophies and medals.

Lancers retain Cesafi title, reach Sweet 16

UNIVERSITY OF VISAYAS THOUNGHI Fraternity of Cebu, 75-62, Thursday night to complete a 3-1 title series victory in the Cebu Schools Athletic Foundation Inc. (Cesaft) basketball tournament at the Cebu City Coliseum.

The Green Lancers, who extended their reign to nine years, earned an automatic slot in the Sweet 16 of the Philippine Collegiate Championship League.

The Webmasters, who took Game 3 with a 71-70 overtime victory, will advance to the zonal qualifying phase from Nov. 6 to 8 in Cebu, where two finest 16 berths are at stake.

UC will slug it out with UMAP fifth placer Adamson, Women's champion San Sebastian-Cebu and Cesaft fourth placer University of San Jose-Recoletos.

Brian Cifra initiated team prospect Jane Mae Fajardo of the Webmasters and 7-footer Greg Slaughter of the Green Lancers were named as Most Valuable Players of the tournament.

Both players struggled in the decisive Game 4. Slaughter was limited to six points while Fajardo contributed just seven points.

Gadjil P. Tipon

SLAUGHTER

'Santi' resets ABL schedule

THE ASEAN BASKETBALL LEAGUE postponed the match joining the Philippine Patriots and the Hanoi Hurricanes yesterday due to typhoon "Santi."

League officials said a new schedule will be announced soon. The Patriots currently share second place with Indonesia Satria Muda Bhinneka at 2-1.

Led by new recruits Nonoy Baclao and Dioner Ramos, the Patriots kicked off their three home games assignments with a 79-61 drubbing of the Thailand Tigers last Sunday.

Meanwhile, the Singapore Slingers will shoot for their fourth straight triumph against Indonesia at the Singapore Indoor Stadium today.

The Slingers—bannered by Filipino import Al Vergara and former Philippine team reinforcement Michael LeBlanc—are also slated to duel with the Patriots on Nov. 7 at the FEOM Flying V Arena in San Juan. Admission is free. Jasmine B. Reyes

Aplus METRO
Lira Alsabeta S. Ulanday

First public columbarium in Metro opens

A FIRST Manila local government unit's Tarlac cave of dying

Mandaluyong site of new facility

By DJ Yap

MAKING ONE'S WAY AROUND the public cemetery in Mandaluyong City means having to step on a gravestone or two, in the 2.57-hectare cemetery, where every possible space has been filled, even the pathways are lined with gravel, many of them belonging to children.

"It's just not right," Mandaluyong Mayor Benhur Abalos told Inquirer. "We should give more dignity to the dead."

Thus, the city of Mandaluyong is pushing for a more respectful way of honoring the departed through the newly inaugurated City Columbarium, Crematorium and Chapel inside the public cemetery in Barangay Wack-Wack now named "Garden of Life."

Officials said the first public columbarium in Metro Manila could be the cheaper and space-saving solution to the worry long associated with overcrowded burial grounds.

The columbarium, which opened yesterday, was designed to house more than 1,000 niches for city residents, who may avail themselves of its services at a fraction of the cost listed in private memorial homes.

A columbarium is a facility where the remains of the dead are housed, while a columbarium is a place where urns containing the ashes of cremated remains are stored for public viewing.

Abalos said the project not only provides residents with a more dignified way of paying their respects to the dead, but also removes negative thoughts associated with dark, scary and overcrowded cemeteries.

Not pricey

Jenny Valdez, the city's public information chief, said most columbariums and crematorium facilities are private and expensive, and, therefore, are accessible only to rich families.

"But the Mandaluyong columbarium will be open to all," he said.

Valdez said cremation is a much cheaper alternative to private memorial gardens, and less troublesome than finding space in crowded public cemeteries.

In fact, the service fees in the Mandaluyong columbarium and crematorium are more advantageous to indigent families than rich households.

At the Mandaluyong facility, poor families can avail of cremation services for their departed loved ones for as low as P8,000 (fresh) and P4,000 (frozen). Regular rates of P10,000 (fresh) and P6,000 (frozen) shall apply to higher-income families.

For the use of the columbarium, poor residents only need to pay P1,250 every year, while those who can afford the rates will be asked to pay P15,000 for a 20-year term, officials said.

The columbarium—basically resembling a locker cabinet stretching several feet wide and two story high—is housed in a three-story facility adjacent to the crematorium. More floors may be added to the building when the columbarium is full, according to Abalos.

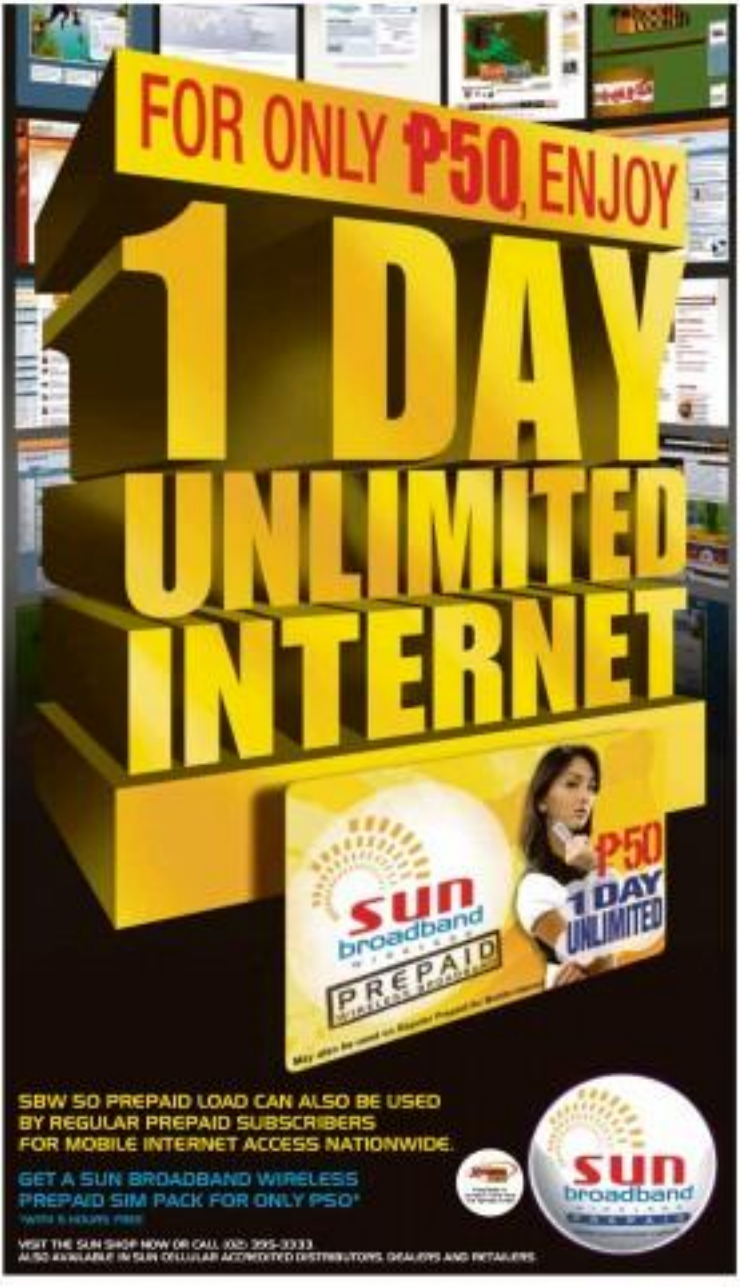
Communal area

The urns, which the families have to purchase themselves, will be deposited in the small square locker with a marble finish, on which the names of the dead will be taped. Each locker can accommodate four urns.

"In order to maximize the next succeeding, people are advised to bring their candles and flowers to a common area next to the columbarium," Valdez said.

He also advised people who would rather visit the columbarium on All Souls' Day and All Souls' Day to instead take their urns with them to their homes or they could remember their dead every from the chapel in the public cemetery.

"This way, they can be together with their loved ones in the privacy of their own [illegible]



Nothing but sad memories for Brgy Silangan residents

By Julie M. Aurelio

MORE THAN A MONTH has passed after Tropical Storm "Ondoy" wreaked havoc in most parts of the country, but Rima Donasco is still searching for her 11-year-old son Ritzy who was swept away by the flood on Sept. 26 in Barangay Bagong Silangan, Quezon City.

"My neighbors have already buried their dead, but I still can't find my son. I don't have a grave to go to where I can light candles for his soul," she said as she held up a faded photograph of her son.

Several residents of Sitio Intia in Alvahalo, flood victims like Donasco, went back yesterday to where their homes once stood to see progress and light candles for their dead.

"We haven't given up looking for Ritzy. We joined search teams in Marikina City and Rizal province, but so far, we have been unsuccessful in our efforts," Donasco said while striking a candle on the mud-clad earth on the site of her former home.

"But we still, relinquishing [sic]." (My neighbors are lucky because they were able to buy their chairs, but I, unfortunate, painting is her neighbors.

The area of Barangay Bagong Silangan—which is near the boundary of Quezon City with San Mateo, Rizal, and Marikina City—was heavily affected by the deadly typhoon.

What used to be charming and concrete houses standing on fields near the mountains of Rizal is now a depressing landscape of muck, broken pieces of concrete blocks and scattered debris.

The residents decided to pay their respects to their dead yesterday at the site where floodwaters swelled and swept away their neighbors at the height of Ondoy.

William Cordova, a resident and member of the Alyansang Maralita ng Quezon City, said they still severe forgot that day which resulted in the loss of many lives and the destruction of their homes and properties.

"Remembering the dead, most especially our loved ones, is in our culture. But this time we also remember those who were an untimely death, deaths that should not have happened if the government had been prepared. The urban poor are the victims here and not the cause," he said.

Cordova claimed that 52 residents died from the floods and that the community is still missing 18 more, including Donasco's son Harry.

Shepherd Ian Cabo, another resident, said he was still occupying the nearby covered court a month after the incident.

The Quezon City government earlier promised to relocate the residents to a resettlement area in Infanta in Quezon province.

Donasco said she has not yet been advised about the procedures for moving to their new homes, although she said one of their neighbors had already transferred to the relocation site.

With her husband Marlon and her three children, Donasco said they tried to escape being caught in the rising floodwaters by moving to a higher road during the flashflood, but their own roof gave way, leaving the three children to jump into the swirling waters.

Two of the children were never found after, but Harry, the middle child, remains missing.

Another resident, Nilda Ibang, recalled the cries for help some residents heard in the middle of the night, especially during the heavy rains ...which she claimed were of those who died.

"Sometimes, I have knocks on my door, but when I open it, no one's there. Perhaps it was one of my neighbors who died who brought her son knocking on the right door," she said.

At other times, she added, she would hear the cries of children shouting for help and women wailing in the distance.

But every time Ibang went outside to check, there was only the sound of rain and an eerie silence.

"I'm not really afraid because they are my neighbors. I pity them because they died so quickly and their souls are not yet at peace," she said.

When Typhoon "Santi" passed through Metro Manila causing minimal damage yesterday, Barangay Silangan residents again remembered that fateful day on Sept. 26 when floodwaters inundated their community and nothing has been the same again.

Even as she survived "Ondoy" and its wrath, Donasco said she would not take any chances the next time another severe storm hits the country.

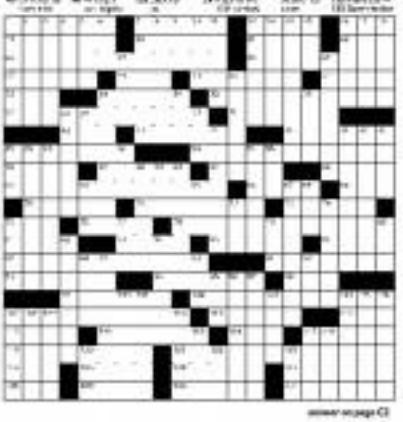
"I don't want to lose any of my family again," she said.

RITUAL/MOURNING residents remember their dead in Barangay Silangan Sunday again.

SUNDAY CROSSWORD

PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Lahiga

THE THREE R's



answer on page C2

Typhoon threat didn't stop crowds from visiting cemeteries

By Brian Sauler and Julie M. Aurelio

THE CROWDS WERE NOT AS thick, but they came just the same, despite the threat of a new typhoon.

A number of vendors at the Manila South Cemetery in Makati City were interested in the knock-down floodwaters caused by Typhoon "Santi" yesterday.

Police Supt. Ronnie Layug Jr. noted that the crowd was smaller than expected. As of noon yesterday, police placed the figure at 2,000, lower than the expected 20,000 figure, although people started filing in the cemetery later in the afternoon.

On Friday, the crowd peaked at 2,500 at 4 p.m. The number went down to about a hundred an hourly time period later in the evening, Layug said.

But it was business as usual for the vendors who lined up the sidewalks inside and outside the cemetery.

Cleaning services were also peddled by boys with brooms in hand. One group included a 7-year-old who said his sweeping service would cost P50 a customer.

Chief Supt. Rodolf Magtibay Jr., director of the Manila Police District, which is in charge of internal security in the cemetery, noticed the flooded areas and immediately instructed cemetery administrator Henry Ty to close the drainage system.

The Manila South Cemetery is in Makati City but it is managed by the Manila city government.

VIPs had to cut in South Cemetery include former President El pidio Quirino and National Artist Lucrecia Kasilag.

Fewer people were also seen at Himlayang Pilipino cemetery in Tandang Sora, Quezon City yesterday, even as the skies were visibly clearer than expected.

"The people avoided the cemetery because they knew there was a typhoon and its way. There were more visitors on Friday," a cemetery security guard told Inquirer.

A climate gently sprinkled the flowers left on the graves, leaving the bouquets wet and fresh on the eve of All Saints Day.

The guard said the flowers were left by visitors who came on Friday night to take down their tents to prevent them from being damaged.

Outside Himlayang Pilipino, flowers and candle vendors set up their stalls in time for the early birds who wanted to pay their respects to their dead ahead of time.

Elsewhere in Quezon City, the effects of Typhoon Santi were not as severe as the flooding brought by Tropical Storm "Ondoy" more than a month ago.

Apart from strong winds and heavy rains before dawn yesterday, there was no report of massive flooding in the city.

The skies eventually cleared in morning, although heavy winds toppled trees right along major thoroughfares like Commonwealth Avenue and Elliptical Road.

Branches measuring more than a meter fell from the tall acacia trees lining the Sunken Garden area at University of the Philippines campus in Diliman, but there were no signs of uprooted trees yesterday morning.

CEMETERY administrator Lucrecia Rasilio shows features of the newly built columbarium.

First ...

From page A17

home, then return the ash later," he said.

Because of the growing numbers of people interred in the Islandia, the cemetery every year, the city government estimates that at least 1,000 niches need to be available annually to accommodate the need.

In response, the city government built a three-floor columbarium that may be against cremation but whose 8-year-contract in the cemetery has lapsed.

The boxes are taken in the crypt and their names inscribed on a wall for families paying them a visit.

Abalos said he expects conservative folks to show resistance to the idea of entombing their loved ones and keeping their ashes in a columbarium, but hopes that with time, they will also see its wisdom and practicality.

WIRES FOR SALE Street children gather wires taken from electric posts toppled by strong winds generated by Typhoon "Santi" along Road 10 in Tondo, Manila. The wires will be sold to junk shops.

"THE RIGHT TO VOTE OF OFWS under the Absentee Voting Law does not depend on the legality or illegality of their stay in their host countries. It depends on their being Filipinos."
HENK PONTEVIL, July 2003

GLOBAL Pinoy

Editor Gerry Lirio

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"True emotion is dedicated to Filipinos overseas toiling on land and at sea, in factories, in construction sites and in the homes of the world to secure a better life for their families. These are their stories.

Int'l touch in island living

By Edna Bangan-Salinas
Contributor

NEW JERSEY—GUAM IS A U.S TERRITORY off the Pacific. It has a small population of less than 100,000 comprised of many diverse ethnic groups. The Chamorros are regarded as Guam's earliest settlers but Filipinos make up the island's largest minority group. Its ambience is very neighborly; everybody knows almost everybody. In this island-paradise setting, many a romantic plot is hatched and life takes a turn for the magical, the extraordinary.

Married Tagalized Igorotcon is an offspring of one such encounter.

When her mother, Sylvia, went to Guam in 1984 to arrange for the reunion of her grandfather in he brought home to the Philippines, she met an impressively helpful guy named Roger.

Her mother encountered somethingstanding, Sylvia and Roger hit it off right away. They made Guam their nest for the family they were to raise.

Married, their firstborn, arrived on Oct. 17, 1987.

Immediately the young Married was immersed in the island lifestyle of Filipinos in Guam. She watched her parents move around in a big circle of friendships with people of different colors. She was hugged on the Friday nights out at the clubhouse where she learned with other children while their parents socialized. Those years provided her with a great vision for learning. Her parents opened her eyes to the value and beauty of communality. "All of Dad and Mom's friends became my uncles and aunts," she recalls with a smile. Weddings and christenings multiplied relationships; they were rites of passage that later allly strengthened social bonds. Birthdays were a good excuse to come together and celebrate while a dotch or a funeral was always a "must attend" event.

Lingua franca

Married easily understood the life-enhancing implications of all these interwoven in a young child. Looking back, she knows that "If her mom's friends did not take turns looking after me, how would she have gone out to work?"

The presence of many American military and civilians personnel in Guam has made English the lingua franca of the islanders. Married was taught early in English in school; although at home, her father, Roger talked to her and her siblings only in Tagalog. They were also always in the company of other Filipinos so they understood Tagalog but cannot speak it.

Deep within her, however, Married is an Filipina as they get. Her exposure to a diversity of cultures has heightened her consciousness of who she is in her core. She may not be addressed as "ate" by her younger sister and brother but watch her discharge her older sister responsibilities and you will be reminded of an ate in your own life ... the kind who looks after the younger brood, who helps mother with the family budget; who cooks the meals and cleans down the laundry ... the one who pass others ahead of herself.

International outlook

That Married has a broad international outlook is made evident whenever she is thrown into a situation that requires her to demonstrate it.

In December 1990, their family moved from Guam to mainland USA. They settled in Orlando, Florida, and Married went to a predominantly African-American school in her eighth grade. She was the only Filipino in her class but that did not bother her a bit. In fact, it made her more determined to blend in and she did. Those three wonderful years in Guam had obviously paid off.

The other big test to her multiculturalism came in 2004 when she met the present "love of her life." His name is Jonathan Chamorro and although it may sound Filipino, it is actually a Chamorro name. That's because, like the Philippines, Guam had been under Spanish rule for sometime; hence, the Spanish-derived name. Jon and Married have a lot more in common than they are different. In tracing their individual journeys to America, they are pleasantly surprised to discover that they were both born in Guam, had their elementary education there, and relocated to Florida almost on the same year.

Meant for each other

"That just proves to us that we're really meant for each other!" says Married with great ease to decide on her name and a wrinkle in her eyes.

The economic recession, however, has taken its toll on their physical proximity; they hope, only temporarily. Jon had to go where the jobs—in North Carolina, a good 12-hour drive away from Florida. The upside is that Married can work and concentrate more on her nursing studies while Jon is away.

Back in the life in the United States. It may look smooth and easy to Filipinos back home but struggling with its stack issues is part of the intimate challenge in the indomitable spirit of its Filipino and other migrants. Only time can reveal the brave of heart.

WHO'S THAT GIRL? Born in Guam to Filipino parents, Married Tagalized Igsamosa, with her Chamorro boyfriend Jonathan Chrisostomo, finds it easy living in the United States.

Women workers lured into becoming drug mules

By Karlo Jose R. Pinedo
Contributor

LYDIA FOUND NOTHING wrong with accepting the romantic relationship and offRomel Ebi outside the nunnery offered by a foreigner she just met in an online chatroom.

In fact, for someone whose every day was partial to and limited by rural poverty, it was a promising invitation.

Promising, that is, for the proposed love from Ebi, 33 interstices Southern Luzon incarnified and got in too deep to realize that all was a lie, she was lured into smuggling to get out of the situation, even experiencing swallowing drugs and literally being lost in the middle of nowhere.

To Imam Ogle, president of the Rise U Ogle Policy Center, this scenario is common in the latest schemes of illegal foreign cartels now recruiting Filipinos to take part in worldwide drug operations.

'Syndicated crime'

"It's a syndicated crime," she said, stating that most targets of the felony are Pinays who live in the provinces, family breadwinners, and first-time OFWs. "Poverty is the push factor," she said. "It's usually Nigerians enticing the Filipinas, telling them to let their girlfriends before completely letting them into becoming drug mules."

Ogle said the syndicates use women—sometimes even those who are pregnant—because the threat of Customs is more relent when it comes to dealing with them. The women are not likely to constitute men forced to do labor, she said.

They can even double as prostitutes, she added.

The Ogle Center, a nonprofit organization whose office is located in Deep City at the back of the Department of Foreign Affairs, was established in 2005. It gives assistance to OFWs, especially those victimized by illegal recruitment more "there is little to clear the government could do to prosecute them."

Today, there are 200 Filipino detainees slapped with drug charges all over the world, at least 100 of whom are in China, she said.

Different case

The modus operandi is not conceived in unlike chain.

A single mother who dreams of providing her family a better life, Joana was offered a clerical position in Lima, Peru, and was given plane tickets and a $1,000 pocket money.

After landing in Peru, she was ordered by her recruiter to stay in a hotel where she met a Peruvian employee assigned to a pension who soon informed her that many Filipinos there were incarcerated because of drugs.

The warning confounded her as she was later so-commanded to transfer to another hotel, which was already in the outskirts of the city, and asked to wait for further instructions.

The recruiter shortly opened up to her: "You're there to deliver drugs. After you deliver the package, you'll be given $500."

Swallowing drugs

Things got complicated when the syndicate member's seller were unable to agree on the price at once. Joana was left hanging and was instead deceived by her local contacts to go to Sao Paulo, Brazil, where she would meet someone who would give her drugs shipped to him by her to ingest and later deliver upon reaching Malaysia, another meet-up spot.

Swallowing drugs and not being able to release them at the given time, usually an hour, could result in poisoning. A separate case was reported by the Ogle Center wherein a Filipina suffered this fate after her flight had been delayed.

Ingenious tactics

Joana knew things have already gotten out of hand in the planned home and asked for help. She was given assistance and was successfully repatriated in March.

"Their victims are like her," Ogle said. "They aren't aware of the real deal, but later on, they would notice and wouldn't be able to say no. Some, though, just go for it. They are paid per delivery of the drugs."

In a recent report issued by the Philippine Embassy in Hanoi, Vietnam, a Filipina sought the embassy's help after being stranded in Vietnam on her way to Oman, where she was bound as the lover to package from Cambodia.

The Filipina revealed she was booked for a job that entailed "a lot of traveling" with a salary of $2,000 per trip. She was sent to Vietnam to secure a Chinese visa, then was asked to bring "something" from a friend in Cambodia to China.

As the request was granted as a simple favor, she had no knowledge she was already being used as a mules to transport drugs.

"She have a moral dilemma here," Ogle said. "You see, even in our borders, for a time, being involved in drugs is a heinous crime punishable by death. As we've contributed if we'd use our diplomatic ties to negotiate for the commutation of sentence of someone arrested for drugs, either for drug use or drug trafficking."

"Of course, we don't want to project the image that we tolerate these transnational crimes."

When an undocumented wife falls out of love

DAVID IS A US CITIZEN who is married to Veronica, a Filipina. They have two minor children. When more than five years, David refused to file a petition for Veronica for permanent residence status. Hence, Veronica remains an undocumented immigrant.

Veronica filed a petition for cancellation of their marriage because of irreconcilable differences. On the other hand, David filed for full physical custody of their two minor children. He argued to court that Veronica was undocumented and that the case for their children's welfare given to him. He claimed that the two children would attain US citizenship if he were awarded custody.

Family rights

The court granted David's wish.

Veronica now wants to know if she can appeal and obtain joint custody despite the fact that she is an undocumented mother.

Those who had fallen out of status and are considered "TNT" in the United States may indeed find themselves in similar family dispute.

In family law courts, both parties are heard based on their rights to be supported and the right to custody of their children. The issue of deportation is rarely taken into account but is an issue that it affects during the hearing.

And when it arises, the TNT spouse usually finds powerless and intimidated.

Equality in courts

It is true that being undocumented renders one vulnerable to deportation if one outright action by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement. However, this is a technical matter where the state family court does not usually take it into account, unless it is necessary.

David's assertion that he deserves full physical custody of their two minor children is a flawed argument. His position is based on an inequitable and unjustified manner. Shifting custody from the mother to the father solely on the basis of immigration status is not conducive to the best interest of the children.

IMFO
Leandro Sandoz Tarentino

One provided absolutely no immigration or citizenship benefit to the children. The facts of this case are similar to a case decided by the Nevada County in Bress Rizo v. Rodriguez (721 Nev Advance Opinion 77 (October 8, 2005).

Threat of annulment

When children's physical custody is in dispute, the court has to decide based on the best interest of the children. When evaluating the circumstances of who deserves to have custody, the divorce court has the discretion to consider a parent's immigration status to determine its detrimental effects on the children. But it may not be the only deciding factor.

The interest of parents to the care and custody of their children is perhaps the oldest of the fundamental liberty interests recognized by the US Supreme Court.

The family law judges generally follow the rule that all parents stand on equal footing before the court despite differences in immigration status, considering that a person's immigration status is not an indication of his or her fitness as a parent.

When a US citizen petitions a Filipino spouse and the latter gets the green card, the matter of petitioning even becomes an issue in family court. When the marriage fails, there are those who feel betrayed and claim that their petitioner married them just for the green card. This leads to the court's belief that the petitioner's use of petitioning as a tactic for petitioning them to become US green-card holders.

Filing an annulment based on "fraud" but adverse immigration consequences to those who feel that their spouses' use them as mere debt of petitioning them to become US green-card holders.

Filing an annulment based on "fraud" but adverse immigration consequences to those who feel that their spouses' use them as mere debt of petitioning them to become US green-card holders.

In contested divorces, the aggrieved spouse who had petitioned for the spouse's green card usually files for annulment instead of the dissolution based on "irreconcilable" differences to threaten the other parties' immigration status.

There is only one instance where the undocumented spouse once petitioned may obtain immigration benefit from the petitioning spouse during divorce. This is the case where spousal support may be obtained from the US citizen if the petitioned spouse is unemployed or has no other means of support.

Spouse's rights

Generally, the issue of spousal support is litigated and the court determines the resources of each person and computes amount of spousal support based on an established formula.

If the US citizen spouse refuses to provide support if the petitioned spouse is not yet a US citizen, she may enforce the provision of the Affidavit of Support that was executed during the petitioning process.

In their regard, the basis becomes contractual. The enforcement of the provision of the affidavit shall become the basis for obtaining support. This rarely happened before but could result in the increase in unemployment rate, since sponsors are demanding support.

Parties to family law cases are never satisfied with whatever judgment is rendered. It is disheartening that the threat of deportation underlines issues for the undocumented. Having realized that allowing parties to inquire about the immigration status of other parties, when not relevant, would present a "danger of intimidation that would inhibit plaintiffs in pursuing their right."

The courts are clear that immigration status alone shall not influence outcome of their decisions on custody and support. Immigration system is established to promote family unity and should not be misused in influence outcome of cases in family law especially when the best interest of the children are at stake.

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Editor Lorenzo R. Gozon

The WORLD

SMART, Negros Navigation set up first ever GSM coin payphone aboard vessel

Shown in the photo is Negros Navigation President and COO Leonardo E. Gonzalez making a phone call to SMART Global Access Head Yves E. Martinez (right photo). Also in the photo are SMART Global Access Sales Manager Bernard R. Ramos (center) and Negros Navigation EVP for Passage Business Jose Manuel L. Magsi (right).

SMART aims to provide our fellow Filipinos real value for their money and a reliable communication network by extending the PLDT Wireless Payphone not only to the mainland, but also reaching domestic vessels that provide daily transportation service to our many fellow Filipinos," said SMART Global Access Head Yoyit Morales.

PLDT Wireless Payphone is the first-ever GSM coin payphone in the country that allows users to make local, long distance and international calls, in areas without provisions for telephone lines offshore and in the countryside. It is equipped with a SIM card that is powered by SMART's GSM network and is therefore readily available to use almost anywhere in the country.

"This partnership with SMART is a privilege, as we can continue to maximize opportunities for our crew to use cheaply," said Senator Pimentel and Chief Operating Officer Jovencio F. Cusolito. "SMART's efficient and reliable communication services are a welcome relief and assurance for us to successfully deliver a safe and competent transportation service," Cruz-Gonzalez added.

"We are grateful that through SMART Negros Navigation is the first in the shipping industry to provide Filipino travelers with a GSM coin payphone on board, offering a dependable, accessible and affordable communication means to both passengers and crew members," said Richard Cruz-Gonzalez, Senator Vicente Pimentel Jr. Chief Operating Officer.

Captain Henry S. Ledesma, Vessel Master of Negros Navigation MV Don Pedro, is equally happy of the newly installed PLDT Payphone on the ship. "I am happy and thankful that we now have our PLDT Payphone on the ship because now I conveniently call our home earlier than usual, without worrying about my cellphone load."

"The PLDT Payphone is a big help to ship crew members like me, because we can now call our loved ones and ask for their updates in minute only," said Rose Samonte, housekeeping staff of MV San Pedro.

Like the typical PLDT public payphone, PLDT's GSM payphone is an operated service that follows the same operating procedure as the previous coin payphone units. Calls made with a PLDT Wireless Payphone to any landline phone in the country cost P6 per minute, while calls to cellular phone anywhere in the country cost eight pesos a minute and those to fixed lines per succeeding minute, and international calls to the US and Canada cost P30 per minute and as low as 10 pesos per minute. The PLDT Wireless Payphone accepts both coins (P1, P5, and P10) and PLDT Touch and Budget Cards. The PLDT Payphone business is managed by SMART's Global Access Group.

Judge orders 3 to stand trial in Smith drug case

LOS ANGELES—THREE KEY PLAYERS IN THE troubled world of Playboy model Anna Nicole Smith were ordered on Friday to stand trial after a hearing that examined the alleged roles of her boyfriend and two doctors in feeding her addiction to prescription drugs.

A judge who heard scorching testimony about the flood of drugs provided to Smith ruled there was sufficient evidence to try the individuals on charges of conspiring to give Smith deadly prescription opinions.

Their lawyers had argued that lawyer Howard K. Stern, his boyfriend Kapoor and psychiatrist Dr. Khristine Eroshevich had desperately to save the doomed model in her waning years, including a period when she gave birth to a daughter and lost her grown son to a drug overdose.

One of the last pieces of prosecution evidence introduced was a transcript of an investigator's interview of a Sindy Mond who said she saw Stern placing pills in her mouth.

"He poured them in her mouth like you would a child," Gina Shelley said in the interview.

Superior Court Judge Robert J. Perry stressed that his ruling required only minimal proof that would cause a reasonable person to suspect the defendants committed the crimes. He dropped one charge that Eroshevich gave Smith placebos, finding there was not sufficient evidence.

With attorneys battling over whether Smith was addicted, the judge proclaimed, "I think you're playing Scrabble in an addict."

All the defendants pleaded not guilty. If convicted, they each could face more than five years in prison. A Dec. 11 arraignment was set.

Eroshevich was the only defendant to comment after the hearing.

"I understand that I have to go through this process," she said.

Smith died of an accidental overdose of at least nine medications in February 2007 at a Florida hotel. The defendants were not charged with causing her death but were accused of conspiring or illegally provide her with controlled substances and supplying drugs to an addict.

Defense attorneys contended that the clients did not know Smith was an addict and were trying to help her.

"Criminalizing a doctor's efforts to help a difficult patient is problematic," Kapoor's attorney Efrya Frenchman told the judge before the ruling. "A doctor's every poor judgment is not a crime."

ANNA Nicole Smith on Feb. 28, 2006 photo

Frenchman tried to show the doctors blurred the line between being physicians and friends. Kapoor once rode with Smith in a gay pride parade and recorded in a diary excerpt read to court that she might ride him because he had fanned her.

The hearing delved deeply into Smith's troubled life and the role the defendants allegedly had in feeding her drug addiction as they were swept up in her celebrity world. Larry Birkhead, the father of Smith's young daughter, said he never saw marijuana after so many medications in Smith's.

Prosecutors tried to show the doctors blurred the line between being physicians and friends. Kapoor once rode with Smith in a gay pride parade and recorded in a diary excerpt read to court that she might ride him because he had fanned her.

oriented. Good habits involved."

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AP

ROBINSONS MALLS TO OPEN FLAGSHIP MALL IN MINDANAO REGION:
ROBINSONS PLACE GENERAL SANTOS

The highly-attended General Santos was brimming with energy and excitement as they participated the grand opening of Robinsons Place General Santos on October 9. Over 100 national and local food and retail players opened its doors to serve excited mall goers who flocked to from the local area and the neighboring cities of Cotabato, Koronadal and Davao, and some areas in Sarangani province.

The sprawling development of Robinsons Place General Santos, located along Jose Catolico Sr. Avenue, Lagao, General Santos City, spans a total gross floor area of 32,700 square meters. The new full-service mall was a near-second in the region as it houses more than a hundred of the country's top national and new local tenants ranging from food, retail and specialty outlets. Robinsons Malls' major anchor stores, Robinsons Department Store, Robinsons Supermarket, Robinsons Appliances, Robinsons Homemart and Handyman Do-It-Best Home Center also opened major branches inside the mall.

"In its desire to bring a truly signature 'Robinsons Malls experience' to the GenSan market, the mall efficiently integrated savvy and trendy shopping, fast and casual dining, and fun and entertainment in a totally savvy customer's warm ambiance.

And in creating an authentic Western food hall dining experience in GenSan's already thriving commercial center, industry key players have also offered a creative mall format, that will cater more than mall goers.

A big and modern al fresco dining strip with wide selection of food outlets will be directly accessible from the mall's third-level parking.

The list of tenants include Robinsons Bank, Sun Cellular, Mang Inasal, JolliBee, Red Ribbon, Bonchon Chicken, CD R King, LBC, Beauty Bubble, Alberto, Gano, Valle, Happy Feet, Foot Bar, Robinsons Watches, Robinsons Everyday Shop, Skin Partner, Glo Shoes, Timberland, Whimsy, Tread Republic, Random Union, Mandala, Balintad Sunglasses, Quicksilver, Smart Telecoms, Mercury Drug, Watsons, Salon Benito, Sole Traders, Bench, Avid Suites, Gamer's Station, Digits n ABC, Sing Bar n Ktv Lounge, Watch Central, Time Depot, Yoyo Style World, Cebu Shoppe, Rusty Lopez, Jeans Atbp, Abercrombie, Kitchen Kraft, Kuala Bags, Odyssey, Tokusaki, Eyes & Shades, Original Crib, Hong Kong Style Noodles, Kitchen Warehouse, Mr. Sushi, Mesa Fresh, Mcdonalds, Cabernet's Republic, Holy Kettle Corn, Donkey's, The Reef Shop, Hotdog on Sticks, and Time Concept.

There are also various homegrown local enterprises or inland not such as Manny Pacquiao Shop, Ice Cream Express, Bugoy Cafe, Tea Sunset Bar & Bistro, Mandaue Tea Garden, Bake & Grill and Coffee Club Kidapawan.

Left, Big Ben's Steak House, Bento Ge Shabu-Shabu, Jollibee's Jolly Good Kalusan, Arganda Silver, Iglesia's Pepper's Steakhouse, Inside Yoghurt, Arjan's Flower Shop, Cafe Fiesta and Dreamy Drapes.

Mindanao's local food industry player Mandaue Tea Garden is known for its authentic Chinese cuisine. It is owned and managed by Iglesia Pepe Corporation, a Davao-based proprietor and operator of several food businesses. It is open on-line pepe, Mandaue Tea Garden has successfully established their outlets in different areas in Davao, Cagayan De Oro and General Santos.

BLUSHE Coffee another proud homegrown Mindanao business is now open at Robinsons Place General Santos. Owned by Visayan entrepreneur Quincy Dalmacion, this fast-growing coffee shop is famous for its rich blending coffee beans, excellent-tasting pastries and specialty drinks. Blushe's newest product – Dalton Coffee, with its unique aftertaste and aroma, BLUSHE Coffee is fast becoming a favorite hangout of the Generation Y. Aside from Dalton's, more famous staples, Mango and Choco Frappe.

Another big concept entering the scene is Mystica's Steakhouse, an Australian-inspired steakhouse restaurant owned by Mr. Ben Tuyac. Although beef and steak items form the bulk of the menu, the concept offers a variety of appetizing chicken, seafood, pasta and pasta dishes. It is committed in offering consistently high-quality food and service, personalized attention, generous portions and a casual atmosphere suggestive of the Australian outback.

Adding to the dynamic mix of food outlets inside Robinsons Place General Santos is Rhapsa, RTV and Reels Inc. Singing and dining will cease for the same again as this promising restaurant workshops the tech-fusion Karaoke experience. Rhapsa also provides everyone with freshly-cooked and prepared foods to satisfy the most discriminating of palates. Every diner or Ole menu goes perfectly well with your favorite beverage, whether this alcoholic or not.

A new player in General Santos' food industry is Cielo a Cielo and Coffee Club. It is a casual casual dining restaurant in the City owned and managed by maverick entrepreneur, Michael Rosa. By incorporating cooked secrets, soothing lighting and casual ambiance creates the good modern glam. It pleases and impresses the other diners' day and night life. Having always been one for people who love to experience what's new and with friends. Michael finally worked hard and reached success.

JG Summit property development arm Robinsons Land Corporation is currently operating two commercial centers in Western Robinsons Cagayan De Oro, which has been operational for seven years now, and the recently opened Robinsons Gateway Davao. It also has already established two residential subdivisions in the region, one of which are located in Davao and the next in Cagayan de Oro.

ROBINSONS Place GENERAL SANTOS

WORLDBRIEFS

Abdullah could pull out of Afghan reveate

KABUL—Afghan presidential challenger Abdullah Abdullah plans to boycott next week's runoff against incumbent Hamid Karzai following a breakdown in talks on how to fix the country's electoral crisis, two senior officials with the organization said. A boycott could severely undermine a vote intended to affirm the Afghan government's credibility. However, an Abdullah spokesperson said no final decision had been made on the candidate's pullout. It was possible that each of the boycott was negotiating tactic by the Abdullah camp. The political stalemate in Kabul comes as President Barack Obama has been meeting with his top advisers to review new US strategy in Afghanistan, including troop levels. A weakened Afghan government will make it harder for Obama to get public support for his efforts. Abdullah, who was once Karzai's top opponent, said he would consider his next to avoid a repeat of the massive fraud of the August presidential election, including the replacement of the top election official and the suspension of second-round. AP

ABDULLAH

Children deaths due to swine flu spike in US

WASHINGTON—The United States will release its entire stock of children's fever-reducing medicine, a top health official said on Friday, as the pediatric casualties from the swine flu virus spiked to more than seven times the normal level for this time of year. Right now, there have been 114 laboratory-confirmed deaths among children," the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Thomas Frieden, said at a press conference, referring to swine flu. The highest pediatric death toll from seasonal flu in the past decade was 88, Frieden said. He spoke to clear up confusion that the US has cases "hundreds of thousands" of people under the age of 18 have not received the vaccine. "Poorer cost. AFP

Tehran rejects nuclear accord, officials report

WASHINGTON—Iran told the UN nuclear watchdog on Thursday that it would not accept a plan its negotiators agreed to last week to send its stockpile of uranium out of the country, according to diplomats in Europe and a US official who briefed reporters in Washington. The apparent rejection of the deal could unwind President Barack Obama's effort to buy time to resolve the nuclear standoff. In public, neither the Iranians nor the watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, revealed the details of Iran's objections, which came only hours after Iran's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, insisted that "we are ready to cooperate" with the West. NYT

US to end travel ban on HIV-positive visitors

WASHINGTON—The United States is poised to lift a decades-old ban on HIV-positive visitors from abroad that was based on fear and ignorance of the facts, President Barack Obama said on Friday. "Twenty-five years ago, a dramatic misdirected fear rather than fact, the United States instituted a travel ban on entry into this country by people living with HIV/AIDS," Obama said as he signed a bill reauthorizing funding for a federal program providing HIV-related healthcare. "Now, we talk about reducing the stigma of the disease—yet we've treated a visitor living with it as a threat," he said at the signing ceremony at the Pause Presidential Conference Center. "It is we want to be the global leader in combating HIV/AIDS, we need to act like it. And that's why on Monday, my administration scheduled a final rule that eliminates the travel ban effective one after the New Year," Obama said. AFP

EU can't agree on how much climate aid to give

BRUSSELS—European Union leaders failed to agree on how much to give poorer nations to counter the effects of a warming climate—opposing the fund-raising drive of their global greenhouse gas talks in December will produce real results. EU leaders pledged on Friday to pay their "fair share" into an annual global fund for developing nations—but didn't say how much they would actually contribute. They only spoke "100 billion euros ($149 billion) is needed and that up to half of that should come from governments around the world. Environmentalists blasted the 27-nation bloc for failing to secure crucial high ground that could press the world's two largest polluters, the US and China, toward cutting greenhouse gas emissions which scientists say are changing the earth's climate. Negotiators in Copenhagen then have to secure a deal to persuade emerging giant countries who using less energy-relying more on renewable power and providing forests that can absorb significant amounts of carbon dioxide. AP

Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Rupisan

Sunday BIZ

FERNANDEZ (third from left) with some of the former and current members of the Tabi Ni Tan team and PLDT chair Manuel V. Pangilinan (far right).

Nothing like the holidays

NLEx, SCTEx hard at work when Filipinos take a break

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

NOT EVERYBODY LOOKS FORward to the holidays.

While most people get to enjoy a **precious few days away from their desk**, Fran Ilarro of Tollways Management Corp. (and for a heavier workload). They make sure that the busy North Luzon and Subic-Clark-Tarlac expressways can accommodate heavier-than-usual traffic as more motorists head for the provinces.

They have their work cut out for them on days like today as the number of vehicles that will pass through NLEx is expected to surge to 170,000 a day from an average of 130,000. For the newer SCTEx, the number will surge up to 25,000 from the usual 21,000 a day.

But they are ready and willing to do what they have to as TMC president and CEO Ramoncito S. Fernandez has been able to impress upon them the importance of their job and the major role they play in ensuring customer satisfaction.

Tight ship

Fernandez likes running a tight ship, especially TMC, as its fees are regulated by the government. This, if it means it runs a bigger income, it will have to get it from being efficient and getting more motorists to use the toll roads that connect Metro Manila to other parts of Luzon.

And if there's something that Fernandez knows well, it is cost efficiency, which means making sure that every peso or dollar goes where it should, no wasted and unnecessary expenses, in other words.

When he was senior vice president and head of Administration and Materials Management Division of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and Smart Communications Inc., he was able to reduce expenses by around 10 to 12 percent a year, without sacrificing the quality of service.

Fernandez tells the Inquirer in an interview that he and his team were able to do this during the early 2000s, a time of rapid expansion of the Smart wireless network, because of competition in the purchase of materials, more skilled purchasing with key suppliers and importation of rightsize credit crunch.

Prudence, discipline

"We exercised discipline and prudence," explains the 53-year-old Industrial Management Engineering graduate of De La Salle University. "We did not just spend because there was a budget."

RAMONCITO S. Fernandez

As president and CEO of TMC and Metro Pacific Tollways Corp., the holding company of TMC and NLEx concessionaire Manila North Tollways Corp., he hopes to apply the same discipline to his new companies, while leaving a lot of room for marketing and business development assistants upstairs.

Fernandez feels that growing the tollway business will necessarily require the highest level of customer satisfaction.

"We have to make motorists happy so that they will use the roads more often. That will help bring in more revenue," Fernandez explains. "That is our challenge, to motivate the people to be more customer conscious."

He only became CEO in January this year, but he is confident that he and his team are on the right track.

Customer focus

The group, for example, has increased frequent user cards, enrolling regular users of the toll roads in a discount on their toll fee. Greater synergy is also being implemented in MNTC and TMC so that manpower will be maximized. The group has also embarked on marketing campaigns to encourage motorists to visit the many tourist sites (beyond and northern Luzon have to offer.

That summer focus was put to a severe test when Tropical Storm "Ondoy" and Typhoon "Pepeng" ravaged Luzon, leaving many motorists stranded on the expressways.

"There was no precedent to the devastation wrought by the typhoon, that we had a disaster preparedness plan, and we activated it immediately. I was on the scene the next day. It was important that we had a plan. And it was tested in the case of Ondoy," Fernandez says. "Looking back, everything went in sequence. We will be more than prepared for a similar disaster where it strikes again. We will see to crash mapping."

"Now in place is a Disaster Management Team for both NLEx and SCTEx, to coordinate with MNTC (for NLEx) and the Subic Expressway Development Authority (for SCTEx). And we have formed patrols who can respond quickly to areas that will most likely be flooded," he adds.

Right decisions

These key programs are bearing fruit, convincing him that he has been making the right decisions. Fernandez admits, however, that he is still getting used to the idea of being a CEO.

"When you're a CEO, you're the boss of your own arena, you carry the burden yourself," Fernandez says. "In my previous assignments, I could rely on other people. There was always a boss to make the final decision. Now I have to make the difference myself."

Fortunately, fortunately, had good teachers whose lessons he is banking on to carry him through. Among his first are his parents, who showed him how it is to be an exemplary employee and to be frugal in his ways.

"My father was a very systematic thinker, he and my mother instilled in me a good work ethic," says Fernandez.

In the corporate world, he considers PLDT and Smart CEO Napoleon Nazareno, for whom he had worked for many years, as a mentor. So is PLDT chair Manuel V. Pangilinan.

"Wally (Nazareno) is a good person with no baggage and no agenda. He knew how to handle people. He always says, 'Don't let it get to you.'" Fernandez says. "From MVP I learned to have a long-term vision, to see at least five years down the road."

Long-term vision

From his position, he sees many good things to come for the tollway business, especially with the completion of more toll roads. This is part of the overall objective of the diversified Metro Pacific group to expand its infrastructure portfolio, possibly to include even sea and air ports.

As for us Fernandez is too casual, he's only just begun.

THE NEW North Luzon Expressway toll plaza, which is busiest during holidays.

Teamwork principles from the fight against poverty

WHILE ATTENDING a CON-ference in Mexico City Michaela Walsh was disturbed by the stark reality of economic disadvantage faced by women in many parts of the world.

Globally, women worked just as much as men, but earned only 10 percent of worldwide income, and held less than 1 percent of the world's property. Walsh realized that most of the women would continue to live in a cycle of poverty unless something was done to break up with them to open opportunities for financial betterment.

Moved into action, Walsh set about to create a development bank to offer basic financial services to low-income women, leveraging the influence of the movie to launch an institution of her own. Walsh noticed focused on connecting women to the existing financial systems in their communities.

A graduate of Asiaweek, Walsh's vision became Women's World Banking (WWB), a global network of organizations dedicated to giving a voice and opportunities to female entrepreneurs living in poverty.

Michaela Walsh exemplifies team leadership. She saw a problem bigger than her resources, envisioned an opportunity, rallied others to help her, and realized her only hope for success was to form a team. Her influence in launching WWB illustrates the responsibilities of a responsible team leader.

Responsibility #1

Leaders seek out and remove barriers to make the team's job easier.

The whole premise of WWB is to do so removing the barriers that exclude women from economic opportunity. The premise is based on supporting women entrepreneurs in poor nations is an absence of start-up funds. They have no bank accounts, assets, collateral, and can find no one willing to make them a loan.

The main strategy of WWB has been microfinance, an effort to counteract poverty by lending capital to the underprivileged. To date, WWB has made loans to 3 million clients totaling $4.3 billion. Currently, the organization is nurturing partnerships with the world's major banks to inform over seven capital to cash-strapped entrepreneurs in disparate locations, extending to more small businesses.

Responsibility #2

Leaders give people the freedom to learn, grow and deliver.

The majority of people in poverty aren't destitute because they lack talent. They simply never had a chance. They were born as slaves to indigence and

trust to counteract poverty by handing capital to the underprivileged. To date, WWB has made loans to 3 million clients totaling $4.3 billion. Currently, the organization is nurturing partnerships with the world's major banks to inform over seven capital to cash-strapped entrepreneurs in disparate locations, extending to more small businesses.

Responsibility #2

Leaders give people the freedom to learn, grow and deliver.

The majority of people in poverty aren't destitute because they lack talent. They simply never had a chance. They were born as slaves to indigence and ignorance, no opportunity to escape.

Through its microfinance initiatives, WWB frees hard-working, resourceful, and creative women to climb out of poverty. Small loans, sometimes as little as $50 or $60, allow a poor woman to purchase a sewing machine, tools, or livestock. Even these meager assets, when coupled with determination and a sense of purpose, can be enough to give a woman and her family a sound financial footing.

Responsibility #3

Leaders set crystal clear expectations.

Every woman receiving WWB financing is clearly informed that by accepting the loan she has now stepped into a model for other women in her community. Terms of the loan and its repayments are explicit. Expectations for return on investment are apparent to both the lender and the borrower.

Responsibility #4

Leaders build people accountable for performance.

WWB facilitates the personal connection between borrower and lender to encourage accountability. While loan repayment may not feel to urgent need to repay money from an impersonal lender like the government, a friend who's sensitive about failing to pay back a friend. The relational aspect to additional within WWB's financing leads to a tremendously low percentage of defaults.

Responsibility #5

Leaders keep a constant of inclusion only being people that are different than they are.

By herself, Michaela Walsh would never be able to learn the languages, customs, and local financial systems in order to help female entrepreneurs in Kenya, Bangladesh, or Mongolia. However, by operating with a spirit of partnership, she doesn't have to be an expert on every nation.

Key execs for WWB has at national presences organizations in three countries. By welcoming like-minded teammates with varying backgrounds and cultures, Walsh has expanded the influence of WWB into 28 countries.

Recap

Five responsibilities of good team leaders

1) Seek out and remove barriers to make the team's job easier.

2) Give the team freedom to grow, learn and deliver

3) Set crystal clear expectations.

4) Hold people accountable for performance

5) Foster a culture of inclusion by hiring people that are different than they are.

(Daniel Ingram Lauderdale Coaching's Master Workshops for November- Developing The Leader Within. For info, Maxwell-certified facilitator Francis Kong on Xan-19-20 at the Edsa Shangri-La) and 360 Leader with Maxwell certified facilitator Anthony Bergalis on 26-27 at the Edsa Shangri-La) $460. Call (02)7259-9 or (02)7251111 (Livingston.)

THE OLD Ozamiz City public market (left) and the new Ozamiz City public mall

Big, bright mall rises in Ozamiz City

By Mitzi B. Fortin
Contributor

OZAMIZ CITY—WOMEN VENDORS in this city used to joke that when it rains—and it rains a lot in this city—it pours both outside and outside their dilapidated and crowded public market.

The old public market had gaping holes on its roof, making the vendors conquer every time the rain visited their goods for sale.

It was as if the city had been forgotten. But not anymore.

This new public market is as big as a mall, modern and spacious-clean.

The P161 million public mall is a two-story edifice with 34,264 square meters of available space and facilities for market-goers and vendors like drainage and sewerage, and public comfort rooms.

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The P161 million public mall is a two-story edifice with 34,264 square meters of available space and facilities for market-goers and vendors like drainage and sewerage, and public comfort rooms.

Inside are 955 stalls and 14 spaces for rent, rooms for offices, banks and food chains, a recreational area, janitorial services and security offices, with restrooms and overpasses, a stage and parking areas.

Commercial operations in Ozamiz City started last May 25, and the mall is bright, spacious and new, and vendors' wares.

Its full occupancy and retail format collection and care of fees, the public mall can be a good source of revenue for the city," says City Mayor Reynaldo Parreño.

Strategic importance

"The public market is in the heart of the city so it's very convenient for residents. Those who buy from the fourteen pass by the market. Those who arrive from Cebu or Manila, when they disembark from the ship, they pass by the market before they proceed to their houses. Others who buy medicine, they pass by the market. Others buy spare parts, they also pass by the market. It's really very convenient," says Lani dela Vega, a retail distributor in Pilipinas.

Florian Steinberg, senior urban development specialist of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) which provided funds for the project, cited the strategic importance of the mall in the port of Mindanao.

"This public market-mall is built in the heart of the city and even in the Misamis Oriental region and will draw customers from other," he notes.

Out of the total cost of P161 million, P106 million came from the ADB's Mindanao-Basic Urban Service Services (MBUSS) Project, P45.99 million from Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) and P7.48 million as the local government's equity.

It is the biggest subproject funded by the MBUSS project, which is being implemented by the Department of Interior and Local Government.

MBUSS has improved access to basic urban infrastructure and essential municipal services in about 40 local government units throughout Mindanao, based on their own needs.

It covers the construction and rehabilitation of public markets, transportation, transport terminals, cultural centers, water supply and municipal buildings.

Aside from the infrastructure and socioeconomic components, it also has an institutional capacity building component to help LGUs better manage the infrastructure projects to make sure they stay for the long haul.

Under a great component, women vendors were also provided skills training and values formation to equip them with income-generating skills.

"It really helped us a lot because we learned a lot from the skills-training which we are able to apply in our businesses. We earn a little more and I hope it will further help us improve our businesses," says sari-sari store owner Lolita Serrano in Pilipinas.

Quality of life

"The MBUSS is among the initiatives being undertaken by the government, which the ADB is working to improve the quality of life in Mindanao cities," he adds.

Project beneficiaries are mostly urban communities in Mindanao who now have better access to basic services.

The P61.1 million Sulsan public market was the first MBUSS urban improvement project in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao and 32 sub-projects are now completed.

There are eight more infrastructures that are either ongoing or ready for inauguration.

Besides inaugurating the Ozamiz City public mall, President Macapagal-Arroyo also inaugurated the Kauswagan municipal hall in Lanao del Norte in 2006.

The towns of Jabonga, Agusan del Sur; Dona Pagdar, Magsaysay; and Jasaan, Misamis Oriental, also have new municipal halls.

The new public markets are in: 1. T. Los Cambronga Siburan, Zamboanga del Sur; Alicia in Zamboanga Sibugay; Sanc Gala Alamar and Balucuan town in Maguindanao; Mati, Davao Oriental; Maloleta, South Cotabato; Guipos, Zamboanga del Sur; Magsaysay, Davao del Sur; Bunbo, Surigao del Sur; and Cabadbaran in Agusan del Sur. New transport terminals, meanwhile, were built in Panabo City, Isulan, Sultan Kudarat and in Kidapawan City.

Other multi-purpose infrastructures are Impasugong Bukidnon; Alamada, North Cotabato; Tago, Surigao del Sur; and Bacuag, Misamis Oriental.

Heavy equipment

Heavy equipment were provided for Florida, South Cotabato; Gapol, Misamis Oriental; Talitay, Zamboanga del Sur; Gumaca, Quezon; Bansalan, Davao del Sur; Gumaca, Quezon; Bansalan, Davao del Sur; Gumaca, Quezon; Bansalan, Davao del Sur; and Bacuag, Misamis Oriental.

Ozamiz City used to be known as Misamis City. It was renamed after Jose Rizal's Ozamiz, festival as the "Fraternity Town of Mindanao" because its actually acknowledged among his province mates despite being its first governor, its only senator and for its pioneering work in the civic-democratic movement during World War II.

A public mall is his honor will certainly make him live on.

(The author is an ADB training officer)

Classy diner makes it in a small town

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person's whole.

Cooking luxury

"We couldn't find a really good diner in town and have to go to the Tagaytay where the family origin to eat our special occasions," mother Selene explains.

Arlene was an undergraduate when she got married in 1971. She started her cooking business soon after to help feed her family.

"We had our round table that could seat four to five people," she says, describing her family's founding beans in 1972. "Students often used to eat at our place would sign us to put up restaurant."

In 1978, Arlene registered her business under the name Sabong Bakery and became a convention site for a big research institution, all the while maintaining their small place for students.

She and her family earned from the concession well enough to allow them to buy the lot where the

ARLENE Lantigo, who introduced the family to the food business, continues to support and share ideas with her daughter Precious, who runs the diner with her husband.

future diner would stand.

Arlene and her husband then sold the business because they had to move the country to build another south for their church.

When they returned in 1991, Arlene continued her cooking business, noting that many of her friends would ask if they could eat at Arlene's new home.

"We had a small garden in our yard where some of our friends would hold romantic dinners," she recalls, adding that there were times when meetings proposals were made on these property.

The garden also served as an extension of their living room because it was raised into a diner, which was established in 2003.

Hearty meals

Arlie's emphasizes a "a hearty place to dine in Los Baños." There they serve "hearty and healthy meals" fit for families.

"That is why we never heavy servings; two to three persons can share one plate. Sometimes families buy one serving and share it. Foreigners who are used to large servings are also satisfied when they eat here," Arlene explains.

The chicken legs they serve, for example, weigh about 300 grams apiece.

The diner caters to families and professionals, which explains the cheap prices. But Arlie says that is because they do not want to compromise quality for example, the diner offers online premier rice or brown rice, instead of the usual varieties.

Specialties

Their recipes are all original, says Precious, citing her mother's concoction called as the house specialty soy-grilled chicken.

She adds that they only serve food that are hard to cook at home and not commonly served in other places, and even though the diner only offers a few dishes, they make sure that the customers would have a pleasant dining experience.

Ads serves seven specialty plates, five starters and salad, and four pastas dishes.

The house favorites include lime baked fish fillet, beef tapsa, and crushed fried rice, with prices ranging up to P295 a plate.

Precious, however, says they are continuously coming new dishes to put on their menu.

Customer first

The diner manual can serving customers who have made reservations because the family assumed did all the work themselves. At that time, they did not see it fit to hire help.

Precious did the marketing and cooking while Jeff was the waiter and dishwasher. When more customers came in, other family members came in to helped.

Their first customers were friends. But word-of-mouth later spread and soon their clientele expanded.

Ads formally opened to the public in January 2006.

On ordinary days, Ads would have around 20 customers. The number would peak during Mother's Day, graduation season and the holidays.

In just a few years, and with the economic crunch in full swing, Ads is now able to generate an average net income of P50,000 a month.

The couple's secret? Jeff says they are consistent with the quality of food they serve.

People, Events & Products

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Edee Arles Espinosa

'3-way chance' to win in Isuzu Holiday promo

DREAMING OF A BRAND NEW surfboard? Or an iPhone? Or better yet, a home theater package complete with a 40-inch LED TV?

Your days of dreaming are over as Isuzu makes them a reality with its Holiday Power Test Drives, which kicked off Oct. 31. The orchid range of fabulous prizes include stylish fashion sunglasses, Canon cameras, Nintendo Wii with accessories, iPod with Shell Candy and accessories, HP Mini netbooks and a grand prize package of 40-inch Samsung LED TV with home theater.

Those interested to join have three ways to exclusive raffle stubs. Just make a reservation at www.isuzuangkol.com, test drive completeness, and purchase of either Alterra or D-Max. What makes this promo extra exciting is that you can earn as much as three stubs should you go through the all the activities.

There stops, three tasks, and more importantly, three chances of winning! Truly, an early Christmas treat so only least a Philippines Isuzu dealership will stocked, and award-winning diesel-powered vehicles, can give you.

Holiday Power Test Drives will cover all 20 Isuzu dealerships: Alabang, Commonwealth, Edsa, Makati, Manila, Pasig, Quezon Avenue, Balintawak, Marikina, San Pedro, Pangasinan, San Pablo, Batangas, Cavite, Iloilo, Bacolod, Cagayan de Oro, Davao, Iloilo, Mandaue-Cebu.

MEET THE NEW FACE OF GLOBE: SARAH GERONIMO

Pop princess Sarah Geronimo is the new face of Globe. The young star, who sang her way into the hearts of Filipinos everywhere, is the newest addition to Globe's talent roster which features some of today's hottest celebrities including Lea Salonga and Richard Gutierrez. For her part, Sarah enthused, "I'm so happy to be with Globe! It's a dream coming true and now that I'm with Globe, I really feel like I am part of the family." Manny Aguilar, Globe's head for consumer and enterprise channels, says, "Sarah is a great fit for Globe since she exemplifies the typical youthful Filipina customer, with her spirit, charisma, intelligence and the drive that makes her stand out in the real world. She is a customer magnet for prepaid or postpaid and it's a pleasure to have her with us." With Sarah are Globe senior execs (from left) Anthia Montano, brand activations; Aguilar; Marcelo Ortiz, chief marketing officer; and Mark Lizaldo, group executive, manager for youth and Globe Prepaid. Watch out soon for Sarah's edgy new lines as Globe Tattoo's newest face.

Multi-generation estate and succession planning

THE CENTER FOR GLOBAL BEST Practices (CGBP) invites everyone to attend a special 2-day pioneering seminar titled "Multi-Generation Estate and Succession Planning" scheduled on Dec. 3 and 4 at The Peninsula Manila, Makati City.

You've built a successful career and business. The future of your family and your business lies with the next generation. How do you get it there seamlessly, cost efficiently, smartly? One of the biggest failures of successful businessmen is not being able to pass it on properly to the next generation.

In this 2-day program, you talk to people with over 150 years of combined experience transitioning family businesses to the succeeding generations. The barriers will start with a thorough discussion on the "Law on Succession" from the authority and subject matter expert lawyer Ruben Balane. The first topic is very important especially for those who need to understand what the heirs are entitled to in inheritance and other legal issues.

Listen as Dr. Ginny L. Santiago, governmental share on DAIE who has done the most extensive research on Family Business Succession Practices, as she discusses "Best Practices in Family Business Succession" and topic on "How Families Have Handled and Mishandled their Succession" (Session).

Find out "How to Address Issues and Concerns of Founders and Successors", a topic to be delivered by Bernardo R. Mercado, founder of the Family Business Development Center in Asia-pacific School of Management.

Following these topics is the lecture of Antonio S. Heldoza on "Creative Solutions to Succession Issues using Corporate Finance tools". Learn "Estate Planning Considerations for the Philippine Citizens and Resident Aliens" from Lawyer Cirilo Noel Nolasco Sun, International Tax Administration specialist.

Aside from the concepts of succession, this seminar will also provide "Practical Applications of Trusts and Foundations" to be discussed by Members Edward Corbin Lawyer Rosario S. Bernardo, managing partner of law and accounting firm Bernardo, Diwata and Pe Law Offices and RS Bernardo & Associates, will provide "Practical Applications of Estate Planning Tools". Included in her discussion is the topic on "Tax and Accounting Considerations".

The world's greatest investor and second richest man in the world, Warren Buffet, aptly put it in his saying: "Business management can be viewed as a three-act play: The Dream, The Execution and the Drama of the Heirs." How lasting your legacy will be to your business will depend upon how well you have handled and institutionalized the transition to the succeeding generations.

This program is HRDF-accredited by the integrated Bar of the Philippines. Interested participants may call CGBP at 843-7146/49 or The HRDF at 896-6936, or e-mail program leader Ivy Enriquez at ivy@cgbp.org.

SBN DONATES P1M TO SECAH

Security Bank Foundation Inc. (SBFI), the corporate social responsibility arm of Security Bank Corp., turned over to San Beda College Alabang School of Arts and Sciences (SECAH) the amount of P1 million to support the establishment of a Professorial Chair in Banking and Financial Management for San Beda College. This is in keeping with the Foundation's commitment to promote long-term and significant social impact through quality education. The commitment to that end is manifested in the construction of the Security Bank Professorial Chair for Banking and Financial Management and a multi-purpose conversion of the Security Bank corporate headquarters in Ayala Avenue, Makati. Shown from left is Rafael F. Simpao Jr., chair of SBFI; Alberto S. Villarosa, president and CEO of Security Bank Corp. turning over the professorial grant to SBFI's representative Ma. Theresa Bautista-Ong, SBFI's assistant vice president. Fr. Justo Z. Gabres Tan, SECAH's president, and Fr. Melvin J. de Jesus, Senior vice President of San Beda College, also present during the ceremony that formally turned over the board of trustees of SBFI and SECAH's members of the administration. Seated and staff of San Beda College, and some Bedan alumni among the officers of Security Bank.

How much sleep do you need?

FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE ACTIVE LIVES and careers, sleep is a mere distraction to more important tasks at hand. For them, spending more time in slumber means more opportunities and more tasks missed.

Some typical, career-minded adults get by on the hours of sleep, but the amount of sleep a person needs really depends on several factors, including age. According to the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) of the United States, infants need around 16 hours of sleep a day compared to teenagers who need 9 hours. Furthermore, pregnant women, in their first trimester often need several more hours of sleep than usual.

"The amount of sleep a person needs also increases if he or she has been deprived of sleep in previous days. Getting too little sleep creates a 'sleep debt,' which means that he/she may feel sleepy at a task," says the studies from NINDS. "Eventually, your body will demand that the debt be repaid. We don't seem to adapt to getting less sleep than we need; while we may get used to a sleep-depriving schedule, our judgment, reaction time, and other functions are still impaired."

Getting enough sleep is needed to improve a person's health and well-being. However, not everyone gets the benefits of a good night's sleep. It is not uncommon for Filipinos to suffer from various sleeping problems, short-term insomnia, for instance, affects people undergoing stress, jet lag, diet problems. The most common "victims" of short-term insomnia, however, are call center agents who frequently shift their office schedules.

For people suffering extreme cases of sleep deprivation due to sleep disorders like insomnias, sleeping pills are prescribed. However, most of these sleep-inducing soporific drugs can lead to sleep dependence and others addictive effects after long term use. Thus, it's best to opt for sleeping supplements.

Most of these natural sleep enhancers work by regulating the body's melatonin. Melatonin is a hormone that is naturally produced by the pineal gland an endocrine gland located at the center of the brain. This hormone is produced mainly at night, to regulate our body's sleep-wake cycle.

Studies suggest that melatonin helps loosen sleep and ease jet lag without the hazards or side effects of prescription pills. Other studies suggest that melatonin may have immune or antioxidant functions.

One of the most recommended natural sleep enhancers is Sleepwell Melatonin 3mg. Sleepwell, a non-drug and all-natural food supplement, mimics the natural hormone that is produced by our body therefore regulating our natural body clock and enhancing the quality of sleep.

Doctors recommend one to two capsules an hour before bedtime. Locally available in all Mercury drugstores, CD NOW, and other leading drugstores, Sleepwell has been known to effectively promote good quality sleep, relieve insomnia and other sleep problems, combat jet lag, and it also works as a powerful anti-oxidant.

HHC promotes advocacy on ANC

TO FURTHER PROMOTE ITS ADVOCACY of proper care for the elderly and homebound individuals, Home Health Care officials have appeared on TV and radio programs.

Recently, Dr. Mary Jean Gines, HHC's managing director, and Dr. Doris Camagay, HHC's geriatric program director, were interviewed by Pia Hontiveros on ANC's "Shop Talk", the daily afternoon lifestyle program on ANC (Channel 23 on Destiny Cable).

Camagay talked about the different adult-issues common among senior citizens such as dementia and Alzheimer's disease, while Gines spoke on the various health services being offered by HHC to the elderly, including the two senior residences located in Quezon City.

The second living facilities at Sandoval's Village and Villarosa 1 are regular-sized homes but adapted for use by the elderly and manned by well-trained staff under the supervision of the HHC's geriatric director.

Gines and Camagay are regular resource persons on Old Inc/Senia Gayo's program UNTOLD and TODAY, the two HHC doctors also serve in the 9-to-1 day edition of Dr. Jaime Galvez Tan's program "Tan's Orders" aired 8 to 8:30 a.m. at DWSS99 7% like. Over at DZAR 702 AM, the pair can be heard from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. every 2nd Wednesday of the month. Aside from giving pointers on health care for the elderly they also interact with radio listeners who have specific concerns.

Last month, Camagay was the featured guest of Health Check/Global News Network Newscast. She talked about preventive steps against pneumonia with a special, higher quality of life to which one might devote to continue to live privately in a place that offers security and protection.

For inquiries, call 926-1481, e-mail us at info@homehealthcare.com.ph or log on to www.homehealthcare.com.ph.

PUSAKI BAGS GOLD QUILL MERIT AWARD

Philkoei recently bagged a Gold Quill Award of Merit from the International Association of Business Communicators for its 2008 Annual Report titled "Inspiring Change". The annual report, awards says, relies on by its clients and their satisfying, real-life stories, to all about making a difference beyond the bank's bottom line. The Philippine Daily Inquirer reporters have to achieve and the highest level of achievement in communications in their successful programs. Shown is chief finance officer/SVP Pedrito J. Dimayuga Jr. holding the plaque together with Jhoie Jolly Imperial accounting services division head/AVP Mirella Espiritu III and corporate planning head Ethelwin Lirio.

Bringing back telebabad with Globe Super Duo

IS YOUR LIFE A FRENZY OF CALLS TO make and even more calls to take? Do you sometimes think you are single-handedly making enough calls for a small economy? If your phone only stops ringing when you switch off to recharge, then you've clearly a caper call to be made a super service to keep up with you.

Enter the answer to your prayers: Globe Super Duo, the first and only mobile service that gives you unlimited free network calls, from Dec. 15 to Dec. 31. That means unlimited calling from your Globe or TM cellphone to all other Globe and TM cellphones for the whole duration of the promo, keeping you safe on landline networks too. That's something you won't see anywhere else.

Globe Super Duo is the real deal that lets you call all, no holds barred. This is the next meaning of unlimited! Calling just about everyone you want, anytime, anywhere they may be. With Globe Super Duo, keeping in touch means much more family friends and even colleagues is something you can do without thinking twice about the cost or worrying about how many minutes you have left.

To sum things up, now you can call landline numbers in the same area as yours and call all Globe and TM cellphone nationwide. If you're a Super Duo user in Cebu, you can call or text landlines in your area as you want, and even Globe and TM cellphones in Iloilo.

Registering to a Globe Super Duo is also super easy because you can do it quickly via text, and the service will be automatically activated on your phone. If you're a Globe postpaid user, unlimited calling can be yours for just P 499/month. And if you're a prepaid Globe user, you can bring unlimited back for just P599 for an entire month.

To make it super easy there is no special billing procedure or perks to use Globe Super Duo. Just dial directly as you would when calling from your Globe phone. So you can pick up your phone and dial away, no hassles, no jumbled up number orders to memorize. It doesn't get much easier than this.

Many times, Globe's head of hybrid marketing, says, "When we first launched the Globe Duo service, it broke ground because it gave you the convenience of a cellphone plus the accessibility and affordability of a landline, so you would not confronted to any landline or other Duo users. Now with Super Duo, we've made it even better because you can call just about anyone on Globe, TM, Globe Tattoo and landline networks too. It's a great innovation and we're very happy to be bringing such unique value to our subscribers."

So tell all your friends and relatives to prepare because unlimited is back with Globe Super Duo. For all the call-a-holics out there, this offer is too good to pass up. Globe Super Duo is initially available in NCR, Cebu, Bohol and Cagayan, and you can look forward to more areas in the offing. To know more, call 730-1000 or dial 211 toll-free from your Globe mobile phone. Or log on to www.globe.com.ph today to super-size your calls with Globe Super Duo.

Life-Changing Technology in the Hands of the Law

PLDT / SMART and the Office of the Solicitor General make the case for better public service.

It was a rainy Friday morning which saw the Office of the Solicitor General full of bright young assistant solicitor generals and associate solicitors wrapping up their light brunch with the executives and senior managers of PLDT and Smart. Solicitor General Agnes Devanadera was candid and open at the contract signing event, which also featured a video presentation and surprise entertainment number by some legal staff.

Later on, the Solicitor General spoke on the contract agreement between the two organizations.

"We look forward to the benefits this more efficient communication system will bring to our organization. We expect the OSG, as part of the large family of the Department of Justice, will embrace new technologies and experience the value it adds on how we render our services to the public. It is our hope that other members of this family get into the same system. We look at PLDT/Smart to continuously partner with us in getting our agency up to speed on new technologies," Devanadera began.

The Office of the Solicitor General represents the interests of the Republic of the Philippines. The office has 900 lawyers and 1,800 staff. It subscribes to a range of PLDT voice and data services, as well as to Smart Wireless Mobile services for its varied and complex communication requirements.

Solicitor General Devanadera shared her thoughts on the newly signed contract with PLDT. She explained that she has always involved private sector partners as much as possible, but only a select few telco carriers can fit the bill. "I may be biased, but I've been a loyal user of Smart for seven years! Thank you very much friends from Smart for being generous in terms of packages."

In the Solicitor General's office, the work of Power ranks poised on top of the tables provides a special feminine touch to the usually dull-as-dust and more relaxing.

In these comfortable offices, Agnes Devanadera admits she is a heavy BlackBerry user, and this is easily seen from the demeanor of this busy public official, (also a former mayor of Sangalan, Quezon from 1988-1998) and a hardworking lady secretary. She made lots of improvements here including new training programs, a provident fund, as well as the provision of laptops and mobile phones for OSG lawyers. Her appointment as the first woman solicitor general is seen as an advancement in feminist equality. She names the vast candidate for Solicitor General with some pretty big shoes to rather, high-heeled pumps, to fit.

Devanadera further added, "I can see the progress and I hope you realize the benefits. I hope we will show our gratitude to the government, and our people by improving the quality of our service. OSG is a very professional law office, and I'm really very honored to be its caretaker and leader. Our success rates are judiciously handled and the OSG has claimed a lot of victories for the Republic."

In response, Ramon Ramos, PLDT/Smart First Vice President and Head of Corporate Business Group thanked the Solicitor General. "This has been the most delightful contract signing I have attended so far. Referring to the unexpected dance number of the OSG staff, I would like to thank you for letting PLDT and Smart be partners of your organization. PLDT is now going on to 81st year. Our mission has always been not just to touch lives, but to help change lives with technology. It is always a pleasure and honor to be a partner with dynamic government organizations such as the Office of the Solicitor General. We are committed to assist you in regularly assessing what your needs are, so together we can enable more lives."

Solicitor General Devanadera concluded the morning event on a positive note. "We are advocates and agents of the people. We have seen how technology has made us more efficient. It allows us to check on the status of the cases much faster and keep track of the hearings and deadlines with much less hassle. The system works very well for us and it gives us the opportunity to serve the public in a more competent and effective manner."

Top photo: Standing from L - R: PLDT's Nina Gutierrez, Smart's Chet Alvir, PLDT's Ilhan Ramos, Assistant Solicitor General Rex Fiscal, OSG Director for IT Eduardo Santos and Director for HR and Administrative Services Renato Sabino

Seated from L - R: PLDT's Anna Lim, Ana Castrillo, Marissa Ramos, Solicitor General Dan, Agnes Devanadera, Assistant Solicitor General Raul Bautista and Assistant Solicitor General Karl Miranda.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Sunday BIZ

Sum of all scrap

JOHANNA'S Grille invites crowds to Bacoor, Barangay

By Marrah Briks Lesaba
Inquirer Southern Luzon

BACOOR, CAVITE—MEME JONATHAN "JJ" Diaz had to mind for his restaurant would not have occurred to other aspiring restaurateurs.

The creative 34-year-old turned every scrap material he could lay his hands on to—chairs, tables, glass holders, windows and even a bar—the sum of which became a dining place specializing in grilled food.

Diaz, owner and manager of Johanna's Grille in Barangay Mangkhos Proper, decided to put up a restaurant in April 2008 after resigning from work as supervisor-dorm for operations at JC Summit.

He named the restaurant after his 2-year-old baby girl.

He then started asking friends if they knew of houses that were being renovated so he could buy unneeded materials that he could use.

Diaz also looked for scrap metal in junk shops, traveling to Tagaytay to purchase "rambol."

What used to be the terrace of his parents' house slowly turned into a 50-square-meter restaurant. He decorated and used "capiz" for windows and "lambat" for walls and curtains.

"The construction of the restaurant was easy, what took time was looking for scrap from different towns," he says.

Diaz claimed that, in making use of scrap to build Johanna's Grille, he managed to save as much as 50 percent—basing this figure on the expenses of other restaurant owners who built their food establishments using the usual construction materials.

Diaz's capital only amounted to P120,000.

In the first month of construction, Diaz himself was the one converting "lambat" into curtains. He later realized that he could not do all the work himself so he hired helpers.

With eight dining tables, a pool table and plastic plates and glasses, he opened his refreshment serving grilled burgers and snack items.

His restaurant became a place where his friends would hang out.

His friends were his first customers and they helped spread the news about his cozy restaurant.

They kept suggesting that I should introduce fresh fish.

JONATHAN Diaz, owner and manager of Johanna's Grille, with his wife Cecille and daughter Johanna

duce grilled food for breakfast and dinner," he says Diaz.

That prompted him to spruce up his menu, adding dishes such as baby back ribs, sausages, chicken barbecue, crispy pata, ribs, pares, sarsa and sinigang. He also whipped up his own blueberry cheesecake for those who can't do without dessert.

For only P200, one could indulge in baby back ribs with a cup of rice and side dishes.

Soon, customers started pouring in, and there wouldn't be enough space at the parking lot for all the cars that were driving in.

Diaz says that he loves to cook.

While his four helpers serve the food and beverage to customers, aside the dishes and clean the restaurant, Diaz tends to the cooking. If he is not selling spare to the market to buy the food he will be serving to customers.

He admitted that since he opened his restaurant, he seldom had time to play basketball or badminton.

The pressure is always there, he says, but when you love what you are doing, you will ignore it.

Diaz's wife also inspired by his customers who keep coming back not only because the dishes are affordable, but that they are also delectable.

Diaz claims that some chefs have also been eating in his restaurant, trying to copy his recipe for baby back ribs.

And that's all right, he says, everyone can cook baby back ribs.

Classy diner makes it in a small town

Text and photos by
Clarice Cabling Palumbaan
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LOS BAÑOS, LAGUNA—A WOMAN'S culinary legacy to her daughter led to the establishment of a classy diner in this small town dominated by lowland resorts and countryside ecotourism.

Precious Aved Garcia-Agabao, 29, together with her mother and her sister, came up with the idea of putting up a diner that would cater to the middle class.

Precious took stock of her mother's recipes, dating back to the latter's food catering business in the 1970s and, with husband Jeff, set out to establish something of a fine dining experience "Los Baños style."

Precious and Jeff manage the diner called Arla—culled from the name of Precious' mother, Arlene Ugalde.

Her all family members help out in running the diner, pitching in ideas to make the dining experience worth ex-

CLASSY 81

Arla in Los Baños offers a homing place for families and friends.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2009 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Sunday LIFESTYLE
Editor: Tinchua Sioson San Juan

Memorize!

By Gilda Cordero-Fernando
Contributor

Reads like a Gabriel Garcia Marquez? It's only 'Ondoy'

I WONDER HOW MANY NEWborns are going to be nicknamed "Ondoy" because there are always babies named after disasters like the war—"Warlito," "Baldo" (evacuee), even a Tagalog girl nicknamed "Buenbuen," and "Feyo," for the leftist revolutionary movement. I asked my friend Rio Almario what "Ondoy" was a nickname for and he said, "Maybe Rolando." Sof Every Rolando is a prospective "Ondoy."

People are still telling their flood stories over and over. Perhaps it is the way traumas are healed. I can't stop listening and wondering how it is ever happened to us and how people were able to survive it.

My first sibling of the flood's aftermath was of friends trying to ask if we were okay. A submerged Denay Ave. was reportedly showing on TV. I hadn't yet looked beyond my window, but sure enough, it was water all around. We are on the highest portion of this street (sometimes, God loves us).

Bravo, our distraught gardener-family-man was at our door with his wife and two kids, all soaking wet. They live along a creek in the Timbon area. Their two-story barong-barong, during the flood (before this one had already been half-eaten by the termites, it was a shack in which Ati, our refugees, would not even stand upright because its ceiling was so low, this hardship rapscepeider.

Ati

The water rose and swept the family's meager belongings away. They climbed up to the landlady's quarters, but that new earthly neighbor is crazy too. To save themselves, Ati had to destroy the wall so they could get to an adjacent house with a third floor. They clambered over, Ati leaving his overweight landlady and her family up and across. At one point he lost his grip and almost plunged into the deep waters with his baby. Tears filled his eyes as he recalled the near-death experience.

Bravo: if you had known, there was nothing to eat. The only food available were biscuits from a store across the narrow street. Everyone had pitched supot over the roofs to which they could hang on with their hands and toes.

Ati brought back what biscuits he could and gave them to his cattle and children.

When the flood receded, the family walked all the way to Pasay too. Ati said he was lucky he could get to us. We gave him all we could in clothes, blankets and personal utilities. We promised to underwrite the replacement of his lost possessions.

Floating corpses

Leanne No. 1. It is quite shocking to realize how little a poor man owns. We think we are more than fair if we pay a pan sugar. It is not. One has to help the deserving. They can never make it on their own.

Ati related how a neighbor carrying an infant out while swimming in the flood felt himself screaming. He called out to his companion to relieve he insane the baby. The guy failed to reach the infant and both father and child perished.

A corpse that was on stake in one of the houses floated out of its coffin and drifted away, bowing and all. It was counted as one of the casualties.

The third floor of one house that everyone had gone to was soon packed with people. Everyone was standing, as in an elevator, unable to sit or lie down. There was only one bottle of water to pass around and every person was cautioned to not only sip but not drink.

A 28-year-old hydrocephalic (hydroencephalic) woman sat on a wheelchair water deep in water (he became disoriented, scared and lost consciousness. The invalid died and the family put her in a large trash can, pushing it along with them.

In a Makati subdivision, an elderly woman afflicted with Alzheimer's began to scream and panic. She couldn't understand what was happening. The family had to lash her to a bulky cabinet to save her and themselves.

Pets, octogenarian

Through the flood was reaching her shoulders, a nonagenarian mother decided to go back for her pets. She scooped them out of the water—one rooster, chihuahuas and cat. Then clung to her shoulders and the cat, to her hair. Alas the finches were in cages and drowned.

Desperate people crashed up on the roof. You wondered how a family with five little kids and an octogenarian who used a wooden stool could have made it up there.

Body heat relates that a small group moaning in an outlying chapel was trapped by the flood. They had to cling to a chandelier. A rescue team bore a hole in the roof through which they were plucked one one by one.

Another 131 people, Mon continues, were stranded on a big tree for 27 hours, watching the deep flood below. Snakes would swim up to them, wondering what they were doing there.

Provident Village in Marikina (actually a catch-basin) was the hardest hit. One family whose house had a concrete first floor, could feel the wonders upper floor swaying. Fast enough, it gave way and got detached, past by past.

In another district, a family stranded on a second floor cried for help to a construction crew on an unfinished building across. Since their inside had been kind to the workers, the crew readily swam with planks to make a bridge and rescued the household.

On T.U. an 18-year-old, who was a good swimmer, had reportedly rescued 30 people. Exhausted from the effort, he was snatched by the current, dashed against a concrete wall and was found dead.

Another man showed the detached stained bathtub in which he had ferried people across a swollen and dangerous river to safety. A rope was tied to the bathtub's faucet hole and was used to pull the bathtub back and forth.

Cars dipped in choco syrup

A sportsman who owned an inflated motorized water bike such as one sees in beaches, also used it to ferry people to safety ground. The bike stopped operating only when the bladder got hopelessly entangled with garbage.

Near the condo where my granddaughter Ari lives, was a construction with a 20-ft deep excavation. Its steel gate had given way to the swift current. Car after car slid down the hole. They were later found piled on top of one another.

In Bicutan, post-flood, cars that had been submerged were being pulled up by cranes. They looked like they had been dipped in chocolate syrup.

The flood was a great leveler. In an upper class Quezon City subdivision, a newly-built bungalow at the foot of a low hill was buried by a landslide. All its inhabitants perished.

There is nothing more disconcerting, relates another, than to wake up and find no stairs to descend and the furniture, refrigerator, library, washing machine, bed, computer, TV set, floating about. One person's grand piano was the only thing not yet floating but a possible if and it was situation.

'May lindol pero'

An elderly woman woke up and called her maid, saying "May lindol yan." Somebody else, she stated said. "Lamalas, tang ina ang kasa ninyo." But what really distressed the matron was seeing her precious 75 Prada, Louis Vuitton and Chanel handbags, the cheapest of which cost P50,000, floating around the room. That is the problem with having an interior—you have nothing.

She was still luckier than another wealthy matron who, when the water came up to her neck, had to paddle her way over to the apartment where the stereo had been, to escape. She did, still clutching on to her shoulder bag.

Another big lady who had been hiding her purchases from her husband was found out when the previous panties had to be removed from their hiding places during the flood.

People save the things they most value. Cynthia Alexander's cook ran to the kitchen to get her rice cooker. Cynthia and her friend retrieved their elevator guitars. An elder rich matron in the board's parlor ordered the maids to take her designer dresses up to the attic. Then she remembered to keep her child dry by putting her in a pail.

A wealthy family's campground was submerged—swings, gym, spa, swimming pool and all. Guess which they rehabilitated first? The swimming pool!

Designer bag

Some nouveau riche carefully preserved for days and weeks. One matron boasted detachment. "I fished my each designer bag from the window. They were soaked and muddied and looked very ugly. I restored how quickly the beauty of material things fades."

A survivor from Ilonggo fell made a special trip to Ormoc to thank the salesgirls for having let us buy several inflatable mattresses. She had put their valuable possessions on them and they were all saved, in gratitude for being spared, a big laundry shop announced in the newspaper free washing services to victims of the "Ondoy" flood.

In Marikina, the then capitol, a notice of dancing shoes reported that many shops lost all their tools in the flood. She did not know the pigs she was taking care of survived. Her heartbreaking husband was even able to retrieve several sacks of soaked rice from a market to feed their pigs.

If you were enterprising, you could earn several thousands just by salvaging tentacles possessions from the debris and selling them. Said as those who had an excess of possessions were relieved of them and those with none got some.

It was difficult to scrub the mud off the walls and floors of her house. But the maid or of dancing shoes said she was still grateful she had something to clean.

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Experts create drama to celebrate the life and lifestyle of the departed

IN SALAZAR'S WAKE. Windows overlooking trees and white drapes from the ceiling provided the little tables decked with Salazar's favorite objects.

PONCE VERZOSA was inspired by José Salazar's workspace that looked out onto his garden. The designer's worktable had the flowers and the computer he liked. Salazar used to sit on the chair to read or her chair when he designed clothes.

Wakes becoming more and more a statement of style

By Margo C. Enriquez
Contributor

WHEN TESTILE MAGNATE JULIO Tan died in the '70s, advertising executive and part-time director Roberto Caballero was asked by the family to stage a funeral service worthy of his station.

The church service was simple but the social match was stylish. Inspired by the grand funeral scene from the musical "Evita," Caballero had the banquisette drawn the invasive trees coated with black drapes, accentuated by golden mum flowers in three lily-papooses.

Gold was symbolic of Tan's prosperity. To accommodate Tan's 5,000 employees and VIP guests, he built a tent city at Eternal Gardens where each of the 20 tents was adorned with scrapbooks. The main tent was literally draped and the floor carpeted with sunflowers and more golden mums. Joe Morales and his string orchestra played Tan's favourite songs.

That event, it turned out, was an indication of where memorial and funeral services were going—a style statement that celebrates the departed's life and lifestyle.

Today, the memorial service, now referred to as the "Celebration of Life," is not a time for mourning but a moment of joy expressing love and respect for the departed.

With the growing popularity of cremation, the wakes or memorial services often include the ashes or cremated remains. These events give organizers more freedom in how artistic—they put the urn in a lifestyle setting of the departed.

The planning includes logistics, services, participants, choice music, catering. Once the venue is booked, the next step is the décor. Flowers, foliage, candles, displays, photos, paintings, trophies or medals and other symbolism create a general atmosphere.

Artists' wakes generally have musical or dance numbers which reflect/remember the departed's full life or help soothe the grieving souls.

Sensibilities

"It's not all about floral arrangements. It's about the sensibilities of people or what they might have wanted," says Caballero.

He recently joined cluster Consuelo Madrigal Collective representing his desire to be buried in the cape she wore when she received her papal medal, Rosas of St. Sylvester, for her generosity of spirit. In her wake, the numbered casket was in the drawing room beside the blessed cape with the papal medal.

SALAZAR'S as reminded by Arlington
BY JOSE VERZOSA

Garden themes never fail to create a sanctuary. Designer José Salazar's wake at Institución de Sta Antonio chapel reflected the garden by of his soul and his love for gardening. Landscape designer Ponce Verzosa used tribute by filling the chapel with cedar cones, flowers and green foliage.

"I decorated the place according to his personality—simple, elegant and lush," he says.

Most of the décor came from Salazar's home—his working table and chair, photographs, portraits and sketches. A string quartet played the classical music the late designer had enjoyed. Rebellious attributes (he loved riding in Salazar's friend Tessa Prieto-Araneta, with the help of Lala Tinio.

Accessible

Fashion designer Jesusa Santiago was synonymous to shoes before he ventured himself on a handicraft and furniture outlet in the province. His kin wanted Santiago's senkevia Lagana Caballero, the organizers of his friend's wake, insisted that the Institución de San Antonio chapel in Makati was more accessible.

As compromise, he requested a burial setting by bringing in 18-ft high bamboo that would cost the departed's time. The congenial Santiago's designs—chairs adorably resembled rice granary pails, a wooden bathtub filled with flowers, a guest list by Madrigal, his paraveras, and for drama, drapes of orange and Thai silk provided by Betty Go Belmonte.

Allen the Mass. Pods were hooked on speakers and played Santiago's favorite Asian music much to the crowd's relief.

"I want to check people out of grief. The ceremony provides a calming effect. Optimism gives dignity," says Caballero.

For the wake of the controversial Miguel Nico Bautista, Caballero had the casket laid out like an island, enclosed by a carpet of red roses. The carpet as a barrier so that people wouldn't touch it.

For his aunt Nena Jimenez, design consultant Rocky Gana set up a floral garden in the Santuario chapel. Never before was the place more abundant with tall bamboo, orchids, orchids and white lilliums.

"You have to look for the noble," says Cuna. "Grieving classes will lift the spirits of the people and celebrate the transition to life."

Befitting

Style does not end in death. The late secondee director of the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions, Apolo "Lil" Pineda-Ocampo, who founded the global Movement & had a wake befitting a fashion icon and visionary.

Beth Lang gathered the Movement 4 group to style the Intramuros de Sta Salvador

MEMBERS of Movement 4, the designroom, paid tribute to their inspiration, Eli Pinto-Marcos. The focal point was Al Carusos's black lipcase was set on Miki Nava's black glass table, also decked with Tes Peralta's candleholders. Ana Paramoure helped Lang with the floral arrangement.

LAYUG on candles for drama at the Santuario courtyard for Pinto-Marcos's wake.

ROSE BY ANOTHER NAME. So goes the theme of Makati's owner Rose Pimentel.

SUEÑO Layug's painting of Pinto-Marcos mounted on an easel

chapel. Mike Haval brought the black steed. Edmico he usually uses for his church and covered three sides of the chapel. He brought in paper planters and a black glass table for centerpiece.

Al Carusos's blackly-pond was served as floral podium. Tes Peralta created huge candelabras using her signature Annie Bound style. Layug's painting of the late visionary stood on an easel set against the black wall. Ana Paramoure, who started her career in flower arrangement, helped Layug. However, flowers were minimal to avoid clutter.

Tony Gonzales worked with Layug in designing the lighting so that people won't feel they were looking at a vase she as they glanced up.

It has been said that it was one of the most beautiful wakes at Santuario.

When Caballero's sister Linda, a cancer victim, passed away, she got the works—handsome, monument, a Villeroller suit. She was elegantly laid out on a granny on-site drapes of beige organza. It seemed as cheesecloth, with roses that changed like white clouds.

"Viewing distance is important to add dignity, instead of people sticking close to the casket," says Caballero. "I yanked out the benches and placed stanchions. Grieving was held in a preconceived state. There was also a bar forced and edible wines."

When the architect of Burtrado, the caterer, requested the crown to cremate Rose Ty Pimentel, she expressed her desire to have Caballero Herwin manage her wake.

Understated

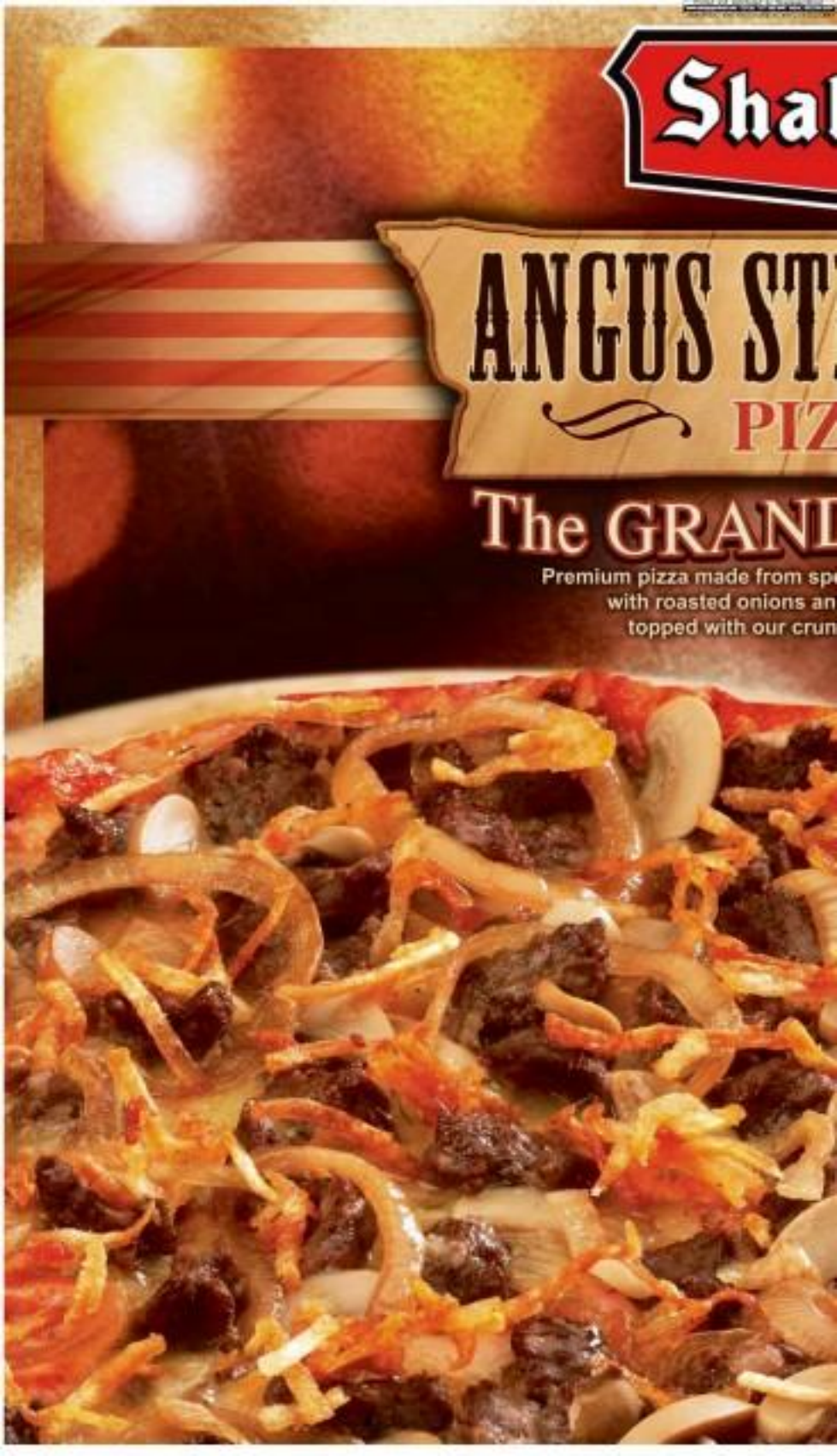
Last January Caballero set up an understated wake for Pimentel. Before the cremation, the coffin was laid in the chapel that looked ethereal in white roses. After the ceremonies, another chapel for the outer was decked with red roses. Sympathy wreaths and bouquets were placed outside. Smiles flew from the names of donors were attached to a large note.

Caballero notes that today's wakes and memorial services have become big business. There's even a website offering videos of the services, and recordings of tears pouring stories.

What does one pull off a stylish memorial service? Caballero says it's unwise to have discerning funeral home relatives. Ultimately, however, one person should always take charge, or even have an events manager who is considerate of the family's feelings.

Outside, "Don't make it look like a circus. Cameras, especially videocams, can be intrusive, especially when they focus on the corpse. Grief should not be made public because dignity is lost. And, have family members on duty. Designate someone for the members so that visitors know that it is for the family members. In the end, it's all about tribute, dignity and good taste."

ANSWER TO CROSSWORD CROSSWORD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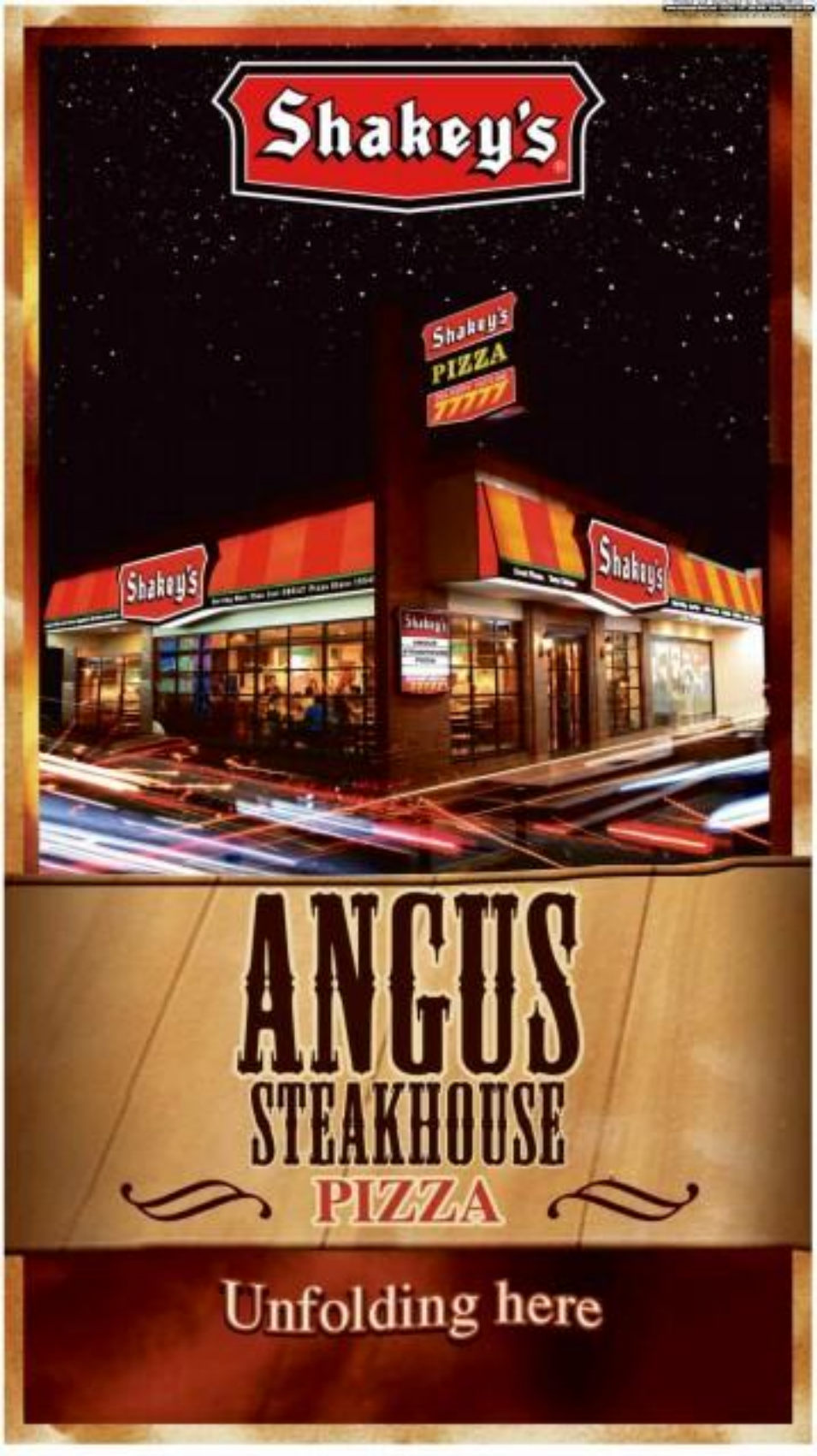
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Unfolding here

She's hurt and confused by her husband's philandering

EMILY POST
Emily A. Marcondes

DEAR EMILY,

I have been with my husband for seven years now. This is my first marriage and his fourth. He is an American. I am boyfriend and accused by his philandering eyes. He looks at girls and checks them out, whether we're in a restaurant, mall, grocery or even while walking.

I have confronted him about this and he said I am too jealous and insecure. The confrontation always ends up in quarreling and I always lose.

As times, I would catch him even turning his head at the woman's direction. Or when I am talking with him, I'd see his eyes fixed at a passing woman or one standing by. I feel violated because he always does this when I am with him. I have asked him to stop and he gets upset and tells me he'll never stop. He has also kept in his cabinet where he keeps his important documents and money, photos of his ex-wives, names he never calls and chap stick.

I am hurt! He does not even keep any of our wedding pictures and even had one sent. Hmp, ring! Does this mean he still feels for his ex-wives and past relationships?

He had admitted to me that he has only cheated once in all his marriages and never did again because his ex-wives battered him. Our age difference is as wide as the US and the Philippines. I am hurt and confused.

DISCONCERTED PEPE

How old is he anyway that he cannot suppress this sexual obsession and evident hunger for women? I am so angered that he is just being a man.

But dating this philanderer basically all the time is your persistent muscle of weirdness. He don't cheating may be only through his eyes, but it remains to can be annoying. Does this mean he is still on the prowl for his ideal woman? Hasn't he found her yet—despite four wives and seven years with you? Still in wonderlust (or woman-lust), after all these years, huh?

If it's just one sense he is toying that's doing the walking, and no harm is done except to annoy you, let him into the hangar through his eyes then. Clearly he has the unquestionable thirst for the female race! But to paraphrase the Bible, "If he can think of it, he can do it."

How is your sex life anyway? It be even good at it? Does he satisfy you enough to enable you to brush off these peripheral distractions to your marriage? Do you yourself satisfy him enough, or do you leave him lingering for something more? If your answer is a big no to most, then your marriage is really in road mire.

Did you cause the break-up of his last relationship? If so, then, you never the object of his philandering yourself. You must have refueled his dagged attentions once upon a time—and must be familiar with the drill, to a saying goes, "We all get our just deserts."

Now, if you love him anyway, save his hunger through your kindness and love. Marriage is hard work, despite what we read in fairy tales. And it's never too late to change—for the better.

But honestly though...you have a weird husband.

Email: emarcondes@inquirer.com.ph; Subject: Lifestyle

How a dead man helps his wife reconcile with in-laws

By Jaime T. Linsuan

The heavy atmosphere in the house changed after, replaced by a feeling of tranquility

THE MESSAGE: Rick Gallardo's late brother-in-law Ariston Gallardo appeared in the handwriting of the dead man

EXORCISM," SAYS THE Oxford Dictionary is the process of "expelling a supposedly evil spirit through prayers." But it also refers to expelling negative entities from a place.

However, this is not always the case. A haunted house may be harboring not a negative spirit, but that of a newly departed relative.

Frantic call

I was called upon to investigate and help get rid of an entity that manifested itself in a house in Quezon City. This happened more than 30 years ago. The names of people involved have been changed to protect their privacy.

I got a frantic call from an acquaintance named Ophelia.

"Two months ago," Ophelia said, "Ariston's husband, Orly, died of cardiac arrest in their house in Quezon City Proper, a manor working in Saudi Arabia, didn't get to see her husband before he died. After the burial, Ramis decided to move with her children out of the house which was erected by her in-laws.

"The day after Tessie and her children left the house, her mother-in-law saw a handwriting on the exterior of her dresser which read: 'HELP US.' in capital letters. On the mirror, too, appeared a faint image of a woman."

The mother and Tessie recognized the handwriting as Orly's.

I asked Tessie, "Are you sure the handwriting was not there before?" She confirmed it was not. "Could anyone else have written it?" Tessie said no.

Tessie related more strange incidents. One evening, she left Orly's groceries in her bedroom.....on her right shoulder. She could not move what she turned to her side. She felt like she was floating, like all of the house of her husband seemed mine.

I explained that such manifestations indicate that the soul is disturbed and wants to communicate with somebody.

I suggested that the evening, I should go but for us a relaxed manner of mind, stick a pen and paper she could use. I first tried to ask permission from her subconscious if her inner self would allow this procedure. She was quite tense, so I had to stop the attempt.

We arranged to visit the house to see the handwriting on the mirror. I invited a clairvoyant friend along because I could only feel but not see spirits.

Orly died on May 8. We went to their house on May 13. With me and the clairvoyant were Ophelia, her friend Dong and my former assistant. It was a postponed visit with the widow since she was tired.

We were met at the gate by Josie, the wife of Orly's eldest brother, Bong. Josie, a chemist, seemed to be the most concerned about the strange manifestations.

As we entered the house, I felt a certain heaviness in the atmosphere, the same feeling I get when there is a disturbed spirit around. I mentioned this to Rick, the clairvoyant, who merely smiled at me. He seemed to be trying to to something unseen.

Josie and Tessie led us upstairs in their mother-in-law's room, where the mirror was. The mirror sat, it was on the bit—"HELP US!"—written in what looked like light brown colored pencil or thin crayon. Over it was a drawing of a silhouette is of a woman's head. The face no longer visible, only the hair's outline. It was as if a finger traced the woman's head on the mirror with water.

Rick felt Josie would be a good medium to receive the message from Orly. While somebody got a pen and paper, Rick started talking softly to Tessie about certain things only Tessie and her husband knew—beyond earshot of Josie.

Quarrel

"Before you left for Saudi," Rick told Tessie, "you two had a quarrel. He didn't really want you to go, but you insisted on going, anyway. When you were already abroad, you made a long distance call. You refused and told him you would come back only if both of you would move out of the house of your in-laws and be on your own.

"You and your in-laws do not get along very well. Orly wants peace to reconcile, not only with you, but with everybody else. He also wants the kids to stay in this house."

Tessie was surprised at how Rick knew all these incidents in the household which nobody else knew.

Rick stood behind Josie who was seated, and interposed her to hold the ballpen tightly poised to write, but she should not let her hand and allow much the paper or desk. Her hand should remain a little above the desk and merely allow the point of the pen to touch the paper or desk.

Rick manipulated the crucial child's at the top of her hand, then placed his other hand on her nape. I noticed it was a typical gesture used by superiors during a séance.

After a minute, Josie's hand began to move in circles and semi-circles, moving faster and faster. Some 20 pages were used up with the unreadable writings or doodles.

Orly's younger sister, standing beside Josie, broke into sobs. She said she could read the handwriting. Rick asked what she could read, as the entranced Josie continued to move her hand mechanically above the pages.

Sobbing, the sister said, "He says, 'Tessie, love Mama.'"

More legible writings followed as I pulled out the filled up pages. Then the handwriting became clear again, and she read.

"Tessie, reconcile. Josie, reconcile." And then: "Kids stay here."

My husband later that immediately before the message came out, Tessie had asked in her mind what she would do with the children. Orly answered her question.

Then the message said, "That's all, Dad's call. On the next page he signed, "Dear...Orly."

Everybody saw it was Orly's exact handwriting.

Skeptical

Meanwhile, the skeptical Ophelia, who was watching the whole proceedings very intently, was so impressed by the whole thing that all she could say to me was, "All right, I trust believe. It is not possible to have engineered this. The message is very realistic and is exactly what my sister would of to know."

Then she asked Rick, "But how did you do that? How did you know what went on between my sister and her husband?"

Rick didn't reply and merely smiled at her. "Only God knows so," I said. "Rick talked to him when we got here."

"Really?" Ophelia asked in disbelief.

Unconvinced, Josie proceeded immediately to the room where her mother-in-law was sewing. She related what happened upstairs and showed her Orly's message.

They both cried and were overcome with emotion as I interpreted them the events with swollen eyes.

And so we silently ate dinner with Dr. Ramis, we were pleased to have helped them reconcile—with the help of the dead.

The atmosphere in the house changed after that. The heaviness disappeared and is feeling of tranquility pervaded.

"Orly will no longer disturb you," I said. "He said to trust in peace."

Sunday LIFESTYLE

My planned 'Markorina' outfit didn't make it to big wedding

"DID YOU GO TO THE WEDDING?" SEEMS to be the question on everyone's lips these days.

For my good friend Jon Perez, the answer is "Yes. And yes. And yes."

Jon's wedding tidbits, of course, were fed off by that of his cousin, Sen. Blue Bojac, to broadcast journalist Rizalina Sanchez. And it seems all of us were there, too, thanks to the TV coverage and public interest in the event. Santo Domingo Church was packed to the rafters, and the biggest couple were breaking from the moment blue got all hot pursuit to meet his beautiful bride.

In a wonderful touch, Blue and Rizza dispensed with their reception at Antonio Tobias, and instead donated those funds to our body of formal tuxedo renters. It was also great to see how Mac maintains his low-key image despite the media circus, continuing to sport his Timex watch rather than some glitzy rather brand. Utmost! Unbold ukl.

Unfortunately for me, "Celebrity Duets" was taping that same afternoon. The show had a Halloween theme, so the production took longer than usual. I had on an elaborate Jun Escario-inspired ensemble, beautifully created by designer-professor Eric Pineda, and it's just too bad I wasn't able to do a quick costume change into my planned Markorina outfit — a Jun Garcia-designed, bejeweled gown...and make it on the church.

TESSA! TESSA PRIETO-MARTIN

Rambunctious

I actually did see Jon in a wedding, but this was midweek at the salon of public Charlie Carmona and stylist-to Leona Paredes. Charlemon's rambunctious entertainment had guests dancing until the wee-es of midnight, when the new bride also sat, tossed her bi-bulu.

Charlie and Leona actually met on the golf course, but her fierce competitiveness has led her to sentence triathlons. At my ty buddy, she wanders over my tee time and the details of nutrition and hydration, while I focus on race hydrate. My both mine with lemon-exchange Axe de Louis.

Leona walked down the aisle in a classic creation by her uncle, Manuel Ben Paredes. Mang Ben also made me a beautiful, fully beaded gown of French velvet, as the proud Melanie Marquez told me she is now busy taking up—I kid you not—law

In lieu of my cousin Leica Cinpo.

The "Queen of Philippine fashion" has been very busy negotiating his monumental closely fashion show, where over a hundred designers extend more hands for culturally creative. Maybe the only entire designers to command authority were fashion designers of different persuasions, Mong Ben brought together all Queen Isabella's designers, and they all for a worthy cause.

"Celebrity Duets: Season 2" contender Melanie Marquez, who was somewhat's guest host, was one of the models in the finale with Mong Ben's creations. Melanie told me she is now busy taking up—I kid you not—law. She is really quite a sensible woman and will be quite a formidable lawyer when she passes the bar.

Romantic and glam designer Randy Ortiz, who made the wedding gown of Iemalia Mae, was also part of the show at Mang Ben. He told me it was an honor to be part of the production and to do his share to help.

Holiday collection

Apart from this, Randy also donated part of the proceeds of the sales at the launch of the new holiday collection of Plains & Prints, where he collaborated with creative friend and owner Rizzanne Stoltke.

The blockbuster P&P collection has been very well-received, and limited-edition pieces are almost sold out. The Randy Ortiz for Plains & Prints weekend launch at Ayala Museum gathered fashionistas and celebrities like Gilli de Belen and Wilma Doesnt, who were dad in their stylish Randy clothes.

All these newlywed couples shared head to their honeymoons using the latest Tumi luggage. Their new Fall-Winter Collection was launched with cool cocktails at Greenbelt 5's Bellini Wine last month. Tumi representative Tina Nebusa was flew in from Jersey just for the occasion.

At the world's leading brand of prestige watches, business and personal accessories, Tumi has always been known for its standard-setting innovations and classy designs. The latest collection, presented to us in eye-catching holograph screen and highlighted by the new Tumi Light and Tumi T Pass bags, is no exception.

And it may all be very well for luxury like Tumi to be wedding, in a gadget, but the really glam passenger, upon greater should really look into the Porsche Panamera.

Sports sedan

Porsche Philippines recently held a private viewing of this first-ever, four-door sports luxury sedan for select VIPs and members of Porsche Club Philippines. The Panamera is a groundbreaking original, redefining the auto market's Gran Turismo category by giving the exterior more generous space—real rear seats—real contours...even more doors... while retaining the driving dynamics of the brand.

In short, Porsche's successful venture into the "four-door-sedan luxury GT" market has made them realize there is a market of family men out there who want to own a Porsche but just can't rationalize buying a two-seater, which is perhaps more appropriate to parade a mistress around. So the Panamera says, "Yes, I drive a Porsche, and I can have my wife and kids with me in the comfort of it."

Porsche Philippines head Roberto Goizueta III welcomed the luminaries of the Porsche AG world who flew in for the private viewing: Dr. Stefan Kalweit, Michael Hiller, Hermart Meinhart and Andreas Wahle, as well as Porsche Club president and our old friend Ramon R. Ang, taking a break from his new project, the luxury GUY hotel for the Panamera shows Porsche's rising commitment to the Philippines.

I actually don't know how Ate completed his last stack of weddings this week, as the last one was just last night, on the eve of Halloween instead. I spent the evening at a Halloween party at The Establishment at The Fort. So it may yet have been a week of rewind yes and yes for me, but it was just as fun at dinner.

E-mail the author at sugarboo@inquirer.com.ph

EARLY evening runners Kiri Sandejas-Manese, Lara Parpan, newbride Leona Paredes-Carmona, Jana de Ocampo, Tea Princess Patrick Garcia and Ana de Leon

ELEGANT wedding of Charlie Carmona and Leona Paredes, here with their close friends, at San Antonio Church

CLOSE friends of the bride Sandy Romualdez, Heather Yorke, Carmela Bana, Tea Princess and Mats Sanders

MODEL-HOH Pamela de Leon Gonzalez

SANDY Ortiz and Raizzan Paredes, creative head and owner of Plains & Prints

JACKY Quiazon, Prime Group of Companies COO

HERWART Fleischer, regional manager after sales, Porsche Asia Pacific; Michael Heller, regional manager after sales, Porsche AG; Ruben Cayetano Jr., Porsche Philippines principal; Dr. Stefan Kalweit, division for after sales, Porsche AG

ALFREDO Rosario, ALH management president

Death becomes luxe

By Cherlie V. Moral

IF YOU LIVED IN STYLE, should it's you who go in style?

When he was younger, Brian Toscano's mother used to work for a pre-need memorial plans company. Discussing phone calls at an ungodly hour was not uncommon in the Toscano home. Bereaved families of his mom's clients always sought her help on funeral matters so that the young Brian, already inclined to fine arts and design, often "strapped" with his mom for outings.

Shoe designer wears his other shoe—as designer of to-die-for coffins

"I hope people realize that, somehow, [the] casket says something about the [dead] person inside it...This is a secret between me and my mom but whenever we go to a wake, we tend to notice what kind of casket it was...the quality, the make, the design," recalls Toscano from New York, where he's studying for his master's in Design Management at Pratt Institute. Ironically, he says, the dead have no say on the type they'll be put in. That's why Toscano believes the task of choosing one's casket must be taken to heart.

This week, Toscano introduces how, in

DETAIL of Lee Harmon's Emerald casket, which got its member from the green cut of the Lenin statue

(STORY IN D2)

Death becomes luxe

From page B1

sheets, his designer line of caskets and urns called Lux Mortem (www.luxmortem.com).

Lux Mortem is designed, above all, with style in mind, says Tenorio, better known for his eponymous designer shoe line, made in his hometown, Marikina. To-die-for coffins, if you must.

Radiance and Emerald

Lux Mortem's urn-style launch collection, called Radiance and Emerald, is named by the size of grass and made of metal and some wood. The images are reminiscent of oversized jewelry boxes but with clean, simple lines, a breakaway from the ornate coffins Filipinos are accustomed to seeing.

Transforming Tenorio's designs, done through CAD drawings, to the actual units were all carried out via cyber-correspondence with Philippine manufacturers. The caskets are available at higher-end funeral parlors in Metro Manila.

"I don't believe in assigning a label cost as an inferior product and selling it at higher margins," says the designer. "Unfortunately, our country imports the most expensive caskets. I plan to change that... The (locks) served and hassy to me because I know that we also export some of the best furniture in the world! One of the goals of this project is to make sure that the most premium caskets sold in the Philippines are made here as well... If wasn't to develop (a) niche, make the price larger, and eventually even export these products."

High-end imported caskets available here can command up to seven figures. While Tenorio declines to give the price tag, he says the first collection is better-priced than metal caskets on the market. (A steel set of Provident Village in Marikina whose urn's home was refurbished in Boracay's ecozones during "Ondoy," Tenorio is donating P5,000 to Marikina's rehabilitation for every pair sold of his launch collection.)

On his homecoming next year, Tenorio will introduce more expensive designs, including a bi-walled mother-of-pearl coffin—"very Orientalist" in design, with leather-of-pearl-lux satin finishes.

There will also be a woven rattan casket collection called Ukulis. Woven caskets, he notes, are already available in the US, but has yet to catch on in the Philippines, a basket-weaving country.

TOP: View of Lux Mortem's Radiance, featuring clean, simple lines quite unlike the ornate casket styles Filipinos are accustomed to seeing.

He will also launch a line that gives new meaning to eco-memorials. The eco-friendly coffin is very contemporary in its appeal. (If I may actually [be] even cheaper while giving the job done and while it'll leaving some style there. When you factor in environmental friendliness, using some, urban space and other important details of modern life, you will realize that Eco-Lux value-driven caskets are probably the way to go (as pun intended)."

Tenorio belongs to a confident and fearless generation of artists and personalities who, unexplained, manifest quirky skills. He's an award-winning graphic artist and book designer (he won Best Book Design for National Artist Salvador Bernal's coffee-table tome last year at the Philippine National Book Awards), and his unique shoe designs are worn by the likes of Aimee Zobel, and exhibited in New York and Manila. This month, Tenorio says New York University has invited him to speak on Lux Mortem.

"There is some value in being new in an industry," he says of his latest venture. "You don't need to do things the same way I ever, or had experience in designing caskets...but what I've come up with are more dignified, gets the pieces."

RYAN Tenorio in New York

Avon Walk for Breast Cancer is now on November 8

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Manila, Legaspi and Mindoro participants to 'walk as one' on the scheduled day

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The annual 5K Walk as One 'Avon Walk Around the World for Breast Cancer 2009' is part of the company's Kiss Goodbye to Breast Cancer (KGBC) campaign, the company's multifaceted awareness and fundraising initiative.

Through KGBC, launched locally in 2000, Avon helped establish the Breast Care Center at the Philippine General Hospital (PGH) (one of two such centers in the country). The center, composed of volunteer groups, conducts regular gatherings for survivors and survivors, and provided much-needed equipment to provincial government hospitals.

Store and its official partners Philippine Cancer Society (Cebu Business Inc., Cebu Tabacos, Bacolod), Bataan Cancer Society, The Peninsula Manila, Ilili Supermalls, and Rotary Club International District 3810 are calling on everyone to 'Walk As One on November 8 and help a record-breaking number of women win the fight against breast cancer.

For more details and information on how to find an Avon lady call the Avon Customer Helpdesk at 864-2800 or log on to www.avon.com.ph.

St. Philomena Church in Cagayan needs aid for repair

PURELY PERSONAL

Josephine Barcenas

FR. VICTOR DIONISIO Quintos from Alcala, Cagayan, wrote to ask for help for the repair of St. Philomena Church, where he was ordained to the priesthood. The parish belongs to the Archdiocese of Tuguegarao and was established by the Dominican friars in 1941. It was initially a chapel of ease of the parish of Lasam, then transferred to Cagayan. Fray Gaspardo Gonzalez, OP, started the construction of the church and the convent, but the church stood unfinished when the Japanese occupied the Philippine Revolution.

The church of St. Philomena is the oldest church in the region. A strong typhoon left the church roofless for a couple of decades. A small chapel was built instead which had to be—because the church where liturgical services were done. The roof was established only in 1952 and was improved in 2004.

Fr. Pio Rito L. Guating, the newly installed parish priest whose task is to oversee the work of the friars, is determined to complete the church and make it a decent house of God before his term expires in April 2011. The works include an urgent need to install the church's pews, complete the roof and ceiling, install additional lights and other material repairs (the pews will have to be completely removed to save the original structure and design.

Fr. Dionisio says that if only 1,000 readers would contribute P1,000 each, the church would be completed. He says donations must be sent to the diocesan chancellor at the Archdiocese of Tuguegarao and must be specified for the St. Philomena project. He says donations must be sent to St. Philomena Parish, BPI account 0089-03-0225-81, Tuguegarao College Avenue branch, or sent to Fr. Pio to the above address. The colonel is calling devotees of St. Philomena to help.

Unique wedding

The recorded wedding of director Gil de Medina Meneses at the Manila Cathedral last Oct. 11 was no ordinary wedding indeed. It was the coming together of an "unsigned" bridegroom and "signed" bride declaring their vows before God, family and friends. The Music Ministry of Arena Ensemble accompanied the "unsigned" singers belonging to the Ambassadors of Light (AOL).

At the reception in the Dragon House restaurant, the AOL performed their unique rendition of "Ikaw" (You) and "Kahit Maputi Na Ang Ulo Ko" (Even When My Hair Has Turned White) to the delight of the guests.

QUALIFIONE Chan, Anderson Go, Maryknoll van, Joey Medina (seated) Eduardo del Rosario, Sonia Atabay and Grace Guerrero

ANDERSON Go and Katrina Yason at the Manila Cathedral

Rymond again before a full house of well-wishers who appreciated the miracle of the occasion. In Anderson's own words, he and Rymond "it was an answered prayer from God that he would meet and marry the love of his life who will take him for what he is—"unsigned" and all.

Watabosht Music festival

A very important guest was Sarina Dean, chairman of the Tuguegao No-8 Foundation, inc. Dean Co's mission who invited him several times to the Watabosht Music festival participated in by the finalists. The music festival last Aug. 28 in Grand Rotea, featured the AOL, who appeared their international audience.

Anderson brought his schools, superior Khen Rachel and sister Eduardo del Rosario and Joey Medina, a "signed" pianist. To set as guides for the "unsigned" were Geraldine Ortiz, vice-chair of the AOL Foundation, and Sonia Atabay, OSU. At the fund-raising Watabosht-an, executive director of Tuguegao No-8 Foundation, Windsbelle is a project of the Tuguegao No-8 Foundation in Nasa City, Japan, of which Sarina can a chair.

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SM Wins Retail Asia's Best of the Best Award

SM Department Store Executive Vice President Jorge T. Medalla receives the Best of the Best Award from George Petras, Asia Pacific Regional Head of KPMG Australia during the recent Retail Asia Top 500 Leadership Conference at the LIMCA Hotel and Conference Center in Seoul, Korea. This is the second year that SM has been named Top Best of the Best among Asian retailers and this also time it received the Gold Award for the Philippines by Singapore-based Retail Asia, which publishes 13 economies across the Asia Pacific Region.

Trophies received by SM for Retail Asia's Best of the Best and Gold Awards

SM Department Store named as country winner at the Philippine's market-leader and innovator given by PDPPA

SM Department Store's top always brought an unforgettable shopping experience to customers with its interesting store design. Mrs. Elizabeth Ahmad of LEO lights the right top the two winners of SM Cribs.

FROM THE CHURCH to the courtyard decorations, monogram's bouquets, Margarita Forés and her collaborators make generous use of rich-style Filipino blooms like sampaguita, canna, and

THE BRIDE, Korina Sanchez, visits her parents' and brother's tomb before the wedding

Margarita's labor of love

By Cheche Y. Plaza

IT'S EASY TO PULL off an elegant Filipiniana wedding reception—at a very scaled-down budget at that—if you have competent professionals running the show from behind the scenes.

For this week's high-profile wedding of Sen. Mar Roxas and broadcast journalist Korina Sanchez, the memorable production was as much the result of polished skill as a labor of love, as the team of Margarita Forés, reinstated chef, was also Korina, a cousin of the groom.

It was from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. with the help of Loreen Kennedy of Fort Pacific 537 Flowers and Serge Ignacio, a sampaguita and orchid specialist from San Andres, Laguna, who sprouted up both the Sto. Domingo Church and the church's courtyard with old-style local blooms.

Forés and her team used rice, arroz chicken and octopus Marino and crumb, mixed in berries and white blooms, bonsuelas, Baguio ivy...on the pews' swags, as centerpieces on the cocktail tables. They also designed the monogram's posies, bunched and gathered simply with cotton, ribbon, grass and cotton ribbons in shades of the wedding motif.

Production designer for the church was Gino Gonzales.

Forés' all-Filipino menu for the simple courtyard reception held at the church's courtyard also had personal touches, featuring her home recipes and indigenous sauces from all over the country.

The pork sik sik cooked-adobo were filled with the chef's own recipe of galantina, adobo and beef pot from Malagos, Davao and Laguna. Negros chorizo and empanada; Cebu sushi and Capiz pritik with kalamansi vinaigrette from Sucrobal and Sagaday dynamic homemade peanut butter from Bogo Occidental and mangga't-atis jam from Cebu; kaong honey with sliced pili and guava jam by Cecile Gamiaga of Marao, Negros, and guava honey from Cebu; durian pinamis with garlic and cream negra.

Pakaskas (turnovers) and pomelos boliñao and quinteas served in non-screened glasses, cooled down the guests.

They also partook of homemade pulvorones by Rosie Bordo in Bears and Lia Valencia cerveza pan

The MEGA ATRIUM LIFESTYLE

A ceremonial ocean tied by SCMC president Annie Garcia and Mega Atrium creators

SM Founder and Chairman Henry Sy, Sr. With Tessi Ivanic Yuyan's Paolo and Josephine Benedict

Lauren Ramirez (Monster Quinque and Frida Ong, Symrah's Sophie Khoo and Eman Garcia with SM's Ron Sy, Jr

Ms. Carol Sy with SM's Ron Sy, Jr and daughter Ana Cristina

Cherry Reyes and Cris Cuevi of Tory and Guy

SM Megamall has grown to much more with the addition of the Mega Atrium. And the mall's tenants, corporate officials, and celebrity guests recently gathered together to celebrate the launching of this exciting new lifestyle haven the Ortigas area.

The event, which was hosted by models and television celebrity Angel Aquino, began with a tour around this new upscale addition to the iconic SM Megamall, where they had chance to get a glimpse of its exciting shops and specialty restaurants. The guests were then treated to a fashion show featuring clothes, shoes, and accessories from the different boutiques in the area, after which SM officials and the mall's tenants joined together for a sumptuous lunch.

No less than SM Founder and Chairman Henry Sy, Jr. graced the event with good friend Philip Cuaycon, welcoming the guests and tenants who attended the event. The latter included Frida Ong, Monette Quinque, and Tristan Ong of Lacoste Footwear and La Deggenis; Avinash Uttamchandani of Promod; Jappy Gonzales and Felix Chung of Fred Perry; Alessandra Faustmann of Michelle, Iran Ong of Zoo Yorks; Sophie Khoo and Rasan Esenca of Eyespot; Paolo and Josephine Benedict of Tutti Frutti; Vivian Yan and Vanessa Vengco of Pepperstrand; and Cherry Reyes and Cris Cona of Tory & Guy Station.

SM officials led by SCMC President Annie Garcia, Hans Sy, Jr., SM Megamall AVP Loni Sibarra, and Mall Manager Christian Mathay welcomed them.

Mega Atrium, a niche mall within SM Megamall, is located over Aida Vargas Avenue, and fully bridges the gap between Mega A and B. It has 15,000 square meters and has four levels.

With Megamall being a mall destination that spans more than half a kilometer, the Mega Atrium is envisioned to be a center of respite and relaxation. Its strategic central location provides a convenient stop for mall visitors to relax and literally catch their breath while enjoying shopping in its upmarket stores and dining at specialty restaurants.

Upscale retail shops and restaurants are planned around a 450 square meter circular atrium. Access to the center offers an air of drama and surprise. Off the existing bridgeway, the visitor approaches the center through a low ceiling hallway that widens towards a cylindrical skylight.

Dynamic non-concentric circles on the floor are achieved with the application of yellow tiles of varied hues. An equally dynamic skylight design matches the non-concentric circles on the floor. The curved patterns ripple out beyond the Atrium area on both floors and ceiling to great consistency and harmony to the general look of the center.

The Fifth Level of the Atrium is the new site of the 1,750 square meter Chapel of the Eucharistic Lord. Designed by Architect Gerardo Tuvera Formoso, the grand chapel has a modern architectural concept with the Eucharist as the focal point in the retablo or altar with the crucified Christ in the middle. The retablo is neo-classical in design, which contrasts with the modern theme of the rest of the chapel.

The color scheme of the area is earth inspired using neutrals like beige and brown. Finishes are similar to those of stones used during the Roman times, which gives the chapel a structural and grand impression, but in a soft and warm approach. Wood in its natural entrance is the most common material used in the Chapel of the Eucharistic Lord, which also has a separate Adoration Chapel and Children's Room.

To serve its upscale shoppers, the Mega Atrium has a Concierge counter and a Lounge area when customers can relax, as well as valet parking and Wi-Fi facilities.

The Mega Atrium is an exciting addition to the 600,000 square meter SM Megamall, one of the world's largest malls. Megamall, which opened in 1991, is said to have spearheaded what is known as the shifting phenomenon in the Philippines with its size, world-class designs, and new concepts like the Art Walk and Art Center, the Ice Skating Rink, and the Megatrade Hall. The opening of the new Mega Atrium adds a more upscale vibe to the mall.

From the World's Fashion Capitals to the Mega Atrium Runway

The highlight of the Mega Atrium launch was a fashion show highlighting clothes from the upscale brands in the mall, inspired by trends from fashion capitals of the world, this wonderful fashion romp explored London's young and independent style, New York's cosmopolitan appeal, Milan's sophisticated flair, Japan's Ginza street fashion attitude, and Paris's timeless elegance.

The participating brands included Promod, ICE, Espada, Fred Perry, Zoo York, and La Senza as well as Aldo, GMG, Lacoste Footwear, La Boggonis, Michelle, Carlton, Doppelganger, Ocean Minded, Hearts and Arrows, Lipsoul, O-Hook, Pink Bubbly and Bida, Walkal, 40Tiki Plaza and Rosa Flowery. Toni and Guy's styling captioned the essence of the different fashion capitals of the world.

London inspired fashion with dress and belt from Espada, glasses and scarf from Promod and boots by Aldo

Inspired by British fashion, checkered fashion shoes dress and belt from Espada, leggings and gloves by Promod and shoes by Aldo

Channeling Milan fierce fashion, dress and accessories by Promod and Shoes by Aldo

Polished French inspire fashion, pink shirt by Wet Seal, and Aldo and shoes by Lacoste, gold tweed Promod jacket, black shirt, and shoes by El Perro

French inspired fashion: black shirt, jacket and pants from H&M

ADR
ALDO
ALL FLIP FLOPS
ALOHA
CARLTON
CMG
ESONDA
FRANCO BARTO
FRED PERRY
G POWER
GAP
HEARTS & ARROWS
HUSH PUPPIES
LA SENZA
LACOSTE FOOTWEAR
LIZ CLAIBORNE
MICHELLO
OCEAN MINDED
PEPPERMINT
PORSMOLLY AND KIDS
PROMOD
STATIC MARBLE
TUTTO MODA
ZOOYORK
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BOY'S COFFEE
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HUMBO
HAAGEN DAZS
HOUSE
KAY'S COW
MOAA
LITTLE ONES DENTAL
CLINIC
LIVING LIFE WELL
MATTS
MR. ARROW TOY
MY PHOTOS
NAIL GOODIE
OISM
ROOSTO JUICE
SECRET RECIPE
THE LITTLE PEPPER
STEAK
PYRAMIDES
SUPERBOWL OF CHINA
TIBITS MOBY
THE REMIX FACTORY
TIA HERMANTIDAD TAWO
TUTTI FRUTTI
PIPER PLAID
PETITES
PR-A-BOO
BLU PEARS
NEXUS
BEN TENNIS
THE SOAP FACTORY
TORI & GUY
WHAT'S UP

Editor Ermie G. Velunta

ENTERTAINMENT

Sexy Estonian on 'PBB'

FROM BIG BROTHER FINLAND, BITTO-niece-born Kaitlin Lane arrived in Manila yesterday for the Big Sweep on ABS-CBN's "Pinoy Big Brother." The 22-year-old kinder-planner with Lucky Bonjourno of Nobody Knows will Charmaine Babe here in Finland? Follow BB's secretary on Twitter.

Jim Brickman served subpoena after show

I EARLIER WROTE ABOUT singer-composer Nelson del Castillo's complaint against Jim Brickman in 2007, when the latter produced a CD entitled "Hope."

Nelson told me that "Hope" is a jazzy rendition of his song, "If," which was popular in 1994, and that Brickman claimed it as his own after changing the title to "Hope." Nelson got very frustrated because his complaint fell on deaf ears.

"It's hard not to have the support of a record company," he said. "I'm fighting for due recognition of my song and respect for all OPM (others."

Nelson's crusade is on. Jim Brickman was served a subpoena at the Inn concert at the Insular Hotel last Wednesday, for violation of RA 8293, or Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines, filed against him by Nelson Del Castillo. Hearing is set Nov. 11 and Nov. 18 at the Manila prosecutor's office.

"We wanted to serve the subpoena before the show," Nelson ordained. "But the producers begged for us to wait till after. The plans seemed to sympathize with our because it sounded so bad, that Jim Brickman snapped rather after playing a few notes, to reassure the boys. He even asked for a street, and saw did cause after several numbers. A TV news crew was covering the event, but Jim would not sign while they were around. The subpoena was served backstage."

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

Music is a universal language, but Brickman and Del Castillo are lost in translation. Will they ever speak the same language again?

By Jeffboard e-mail sourcing: Jobelle.ignite@yahoo.com

Confessions of a young scriptwriter

VANESSA VALDEZ knows of some that some directors changed to accommodate an actor's demands—or their own.

By Michael D. Garcia
Contributor

VANESSA VALDEZ WROTE, or co-wrote, some of the more memorable Filipino romantic movies of recent years, including "One More Chance," "You Are the One," "A Love Story" and, "You'll Love You So."

Most of the time, when she writes, Vanessa says, she keeps the stars of the movie in mind. She explains: "If an Gomez projects are usually actor-driven. As such, before a writer starts to work, he or she already knows who the actors will be. Depending on the writer's personality and personal preferences, a casting combination can become a limitation during story development, or a challenge to be more creative."

Though she herself does not see the need to always watch films with actors or will deliver them, Vanessa says, "Sometimes, I do have to consider who's playing the role and what are their actor's strengths and weaknesses. A good example is Sam Milby. I know he's still not fluent in Tagalog, so even though the dialogue may sound more idiomatic in Tagalog, if it's a very intense or emotional scene, I'd consider writing it in English so that his delivery can be more truthful."

Vanessa admits there have been several occasions when the dialogues she wrote were tampered. "Some actors don't realize that changing or mispronouncing a word, forgetting a preposition, or delivering the line with the wrong tone can make the line sound nonsensical."

True collaborators

However, she adds that there are actors who can put their own spin on the script and give the lines more depth and emotion. These include John Lloyd Cruz, Bea Alonzo and, yes, Sam Milby. "As a writer," Vanessa states, "I appreciate the fact that they ask questions about their characters and the story—and consult the writer's and the director. That way, all the people involved become true collaborators in the storytelling process. Aimee sila pareho! Kaya pag nagpatinod sila sa pelikula, they become their characters. The artists fades into the background. The story becomes more truthful and moving."

> "I appreciate actors, like Sam Milby and John Lloyd Cruz, who ask questions about the story'

Vanessa says that, sometimes, either the actor's ego or his brain get in the way of a good performance. This is actually one of the disadvantages of writing star-driven projects, she points out. "Medyo pag mas malaki 'yung ego ng artista kaysa sa pelikula. I know of horror stories where the story is drastically changed to accommodate an actor's limitations and demands. The match is that the final product is an extremely watered-down version of a very promising screenplay."

No formal training

Vanessa finished her MA Development Education degree at the University of Asia and the Pacific (UA&P) in 2002, where she later became a full-time faculty member of the School of Education. In 2004, she started teaching part-time at diverse time to accommodate.

However, in 2008, she joined Star Cinema's Creative Department. Her growing responsibilities as a creative manager made it impossible for her to teach in UA&P at all. She relates, "I had no formal training in film or script-writing. Everything I know about writing for the screen, I learned on the job."

She stresses that it's not actual, personal experiences that make an effective storyteller. "More than anything," she says, "it's empathy."

It does not hurt, either, that Vanessa makes it a point to interview people who have undergone the same hurts and joys as her characters. For instance, as part of the research for "One More Chance," a movie about love lost and regained, she invited her friends, including some who had just emerged from a break-up, to an informal exchange with herself and her co-writer and director Carlo Gaston Medina. The resulting script pieced together experiences and in

CONFESSIONS E2

An Oscar for 'This is It'?

LOS ANGELES—"MICHAEL Jackson's This Is It" comes too late in the year to be considered for a documentary Oscar, but the film about the late King of Pop's preparations for a series of comeback concerts could grab by the usher Hollywood honors, including the Academy Award for Best Picture.

The film, which opened around the globe Sunday and Wednesday has already earned rave praise from fans and critics, who say it restores Jackson's reputation as a world-class entertainer.

Director Kenny Ortega, a longtime Jackson collaborator who was overseeing his London concert comeback, crafted the nearly-two-hour film from more than 100 hours of footage recorded during rehearsals for the London shows, which were to have begun in July. Jackson died June 25 at age 50.

"What we did have was focus on telling a good story and creating a film for the fans, really embedding them so understand what Michael Jackson had dreamed for them," Ortega said Wednesday.

He added it was his hope "the audience for this film will grow and that as many people come to see it as possible because I think that it's a wonderful story about a brilliant man." Awards, Oscar, that's all gone—wishful thinking."

AP

MICHAEL Jackson

Fans crown MJ box-office king

LOS ANGELES— THE MICHAEL Jackson movie, "This is It" earned $23.1 million as world-wide box offices on its various opening day in the Americas on Oct. 28 in first, around the globe, earned $60 in strong numbers, Columbia Pictures said on Thursday.

The movie studio said the film, which shows the late pop star rehearsing for a series of comeback concerts before his death in June, made $7.4 million in the United States and Canada, and another $12.7 million internationally.

In Manila, the movie grossed P5.8 million ($115,000) in its first day, according to reports from Columbia Pictures, the film's local distributor.

Reuters

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Best 'parol' to win ₱1M

THE MANILA Broadcasting Company is giving P100,000 to the owners of this year's "Best ng Parol," a panel-making competition. Lanterns 6 to 8 ft. tall, including ornaments, should be made of recycled materials, utilize energy-saving bulbs and also be environment friendly and outlast conditions during the Christmas season. Deadline for entries is Dec. 4, 12 p.m. Call (02)6249 or 6926369.

NIÑA ALONZO

Confessions...

From page 31

nights shared by Vhenna's friends, and gave the movie a lot of thoughts and feelings that the viewers could relate to.

For "And I Love You So," Sheena also did her homework. "My [stepmom] read old movies and got them to share what it felt like to love, lose their partners. We asked Ben [Alcayaga] to sit down with one of our LGBT friends. That helped her a lot, considering that during the time the movie was being shot, she would come from saying, 'Betty La Fea,' to which her character was the exact opposite of her role in the movie."

Her own favorite

Among Vhenna's favorite lines from scenes she has written is a line from "A Love Story." It was delivered by Shaleen Soriano, who plays a mistress to Aga Muhlach's character. In their tearful goodbye, Shaleen tells Aga, "Bitin di dahil ng nagpapaiyot ka. Bitin dahil ng nagpapaiyot ka. Bitin dahil ng nagpapaiyot ka. Bitin

RICHARD Gutierrez with director Yam Laranas on set

'Patient X' sickly

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

DERIVATIVE AND ALMOST DEvoid of genuine tension, "Patient X" is Yam Laranas' new horror venture. Sick, in that too many works after "The Echo," the Hollywood remake of his local film "Sigaw." This time, the hugeness aren't zombies approximate, but a group of mad men doing carnage.

Expectations are unavoidable; Laranas has a gift for creatively melding mood with uncharted storytelling, after all. But "Patient X," despite some genuinely eerie, poised visuals, has a pretty thin story, and owners on pretty two-dimensional characters.

REVIEW

No fresh takes

Richard Gutierrez plays a doctor, Jonas, sole survivor of a horrendous vampire attack a few decades back. He soon comes face to face with the murder suspect, the regenerating (God's a.k.a. Patient X (Cristine Reyes), imprisoned in a hospital basement. Not surprisingly, Claudia's husband Marcia (Elvis Gutierrez), a fellow vampire, brazenly attacks the hospital.

It quickly becomes a cat-and-mouse, dress-and-corpse monster flick that, sadly, we've seen many times before. It's tricky enough to have vampires be villains; there aren't many fresh takes on them. They're no different here—just frumpy, recurring and violent beasts with human-like emotions.

Procedural

The show is purely by-the-numbers. The situations are so worn-out and procedural, that it becomes difficult to root for the characters. It doesn't help that every time Gutierrez shouts, it feels half-hearted and unconvincing. Yi Yiinsiad, as the vengeful cop who punishes the undead, does okay. But his character is pretty close when it comes to vampire-slaying.

Perplexing and patience-testing, "Patient X" isn't an entertaining romance at all. It's not outright interesting imagery, but again, it's difficult to respect disbelief. It gets weird when an attraction between Gutierrez and Reyes' characters is implied. As far as the vampires, the occasional bone—with their perpetually bared fangs and bouncy gaits—are quite flat and predictable. You just know exactly what they'll attack, how they'll behave, or when they'll get what they deserve.

Auditions for Kapamilya search

AUDITIONS FOR "PILIPINAS got Talent," the local franchise of the "Pinoy's Got Talent" reality search, begin at the Lyceum of the Philippines in Batangas on Nov. 6, 7, and 8.

The show to be hosted by actor Luis Manzano and singer Billy Crawford on ABS-CBN will also conduct tryouts in the following: Cebu on Nov. 11, 12, and 13; Baguio on Nov. 19, 20, 21; Cagayan De Oro on Nov. 25, 26, and 27; Davao on Nov. 30, Dec. 1 and 2; and Manila on Dec. 3, 6, 12 and 13. Log on to 9-PGT's website at http://pilipinas.gottalent.abs-cbn.com.

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2 PATIENT X
3 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
4 500 DAYS OF SUMMER
5 ASTROBOY

SM MALL OF ASIA
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2 JENNIFER'S BODY
3 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
4 500 DAYS OF SUMMER
5 PATIENT X

MEGAMALL
1 BATTLE FOR TERRA (3D)
2 PATIENT X
3 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
4 JENNIFER'S BODY
5 ASTROBOY
6 500 DAYS OF SUMMER
7 PATIENT X

CITY MARILA
1 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
2 PATIENT X
3 BATTLE FOR TERRA (3D)
4 500 DAYS OF SUMMER
5 PATIENT X
6 ASTROBOY
7 HALLOWEEN 2

FAIRVIEW
1 PATIENT X
2 HALLOWEEN 2
3 JENNIFER'S BODY
4 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
5 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
6 ASTROBOY
7 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
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11 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT
12 MICHAEL JACKSON: THIS IS IT

Durable stars–for all reasons

WHY DO ONLY A FEW SHOW BIZ women become big stars, while most other superstars end up as mere starlets or never-weres? To answer that key question, take a look at the enduring popularity of some stars who, for any and all reasons, have enjoyed the support and affection of fans for many decades:

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Vilma Santos began her acting career as a child star, became a teen star, skillfully morphed her screen image to star-worthy sexy award-winning adult roles, launched a new career as public servant, and now has moved up to national prominence in that field, while evolving her stellar acting career with a new bit movie.

What accounts for Vilma's durability as the quintessential star for all seasons? It's her ability to *pretend*. It make radical but savvy adjustments to her public persona, and making each year, since she did come around to making those big changes, she was ready to do a good job. Then, Vilma has maintained a high level of competence in her work through the decades, and therefore "deserving" her fans' undying loyalty.

In contrast, Sen. Ramon's popularity has been less secure. There was a time when she couldn't do anything wrong, and went as far as successfully transforming Filipinos' perception of widowhood.

But her years (such her phenomenal reach on the country's economic woes, most local stars were of the type, as American or Spanish-looking as possible. But Nora accentuated the native with her dusky looks and performing skills, that she turned that deeply ingrained "colonial" preference on its ear. The shift may not have lasted long, but while it was on, Nora's Pinay-looking stars mightily became popular.

The complete opposite was Sexy singer-dowd became her prime reason for becoming a star. Coupled with her unusually textured singing voice and acting talent, it explains why she has been described as the country's first authentic superstar.

These days, some people regard Nora as a has-been, but not disappear. Her acting talent has matured and deepened through the years, so if a great role comes around, she can still revive her stellar career to a big way.

One third durable star for all seasons, Sharon Cuneta, is younger than Vilma and Nora, but has also acquired iconic status due to her ability to periodically reinvent herself. Initially known primarily as a singer, she's demonstrated her versatility by doubling up impressive achievements in movies, producing her own product endorsements and support of "indie" productions.

Sharon's screen performances have also become markedly different from her early teen and young-adult roles. So her participation in movies like "Caregiver" and "Crying Ladies" indicate Sharon has effectively calibrated her "itch girl" prodigee and made herself accessible to all types of viewers.

The "democratic" image has made her, like Vilma, a perennial political crowd-pleaser but Sharon has chosen to pass on that offer and has instead fostered occasioning her popularity to boost the political career of her husband, Sen. Kiko Pangilinan.

Why do a few stars remain popular for decades? Because they each have a unique essence—her known talents to make her appearances to keep their fans consistently delighted—and amazed.

'Halloween 8'

It's that time of the year again, and Michael Myers has come back home to take care of some unfinished family business. Trying to escape from the evil doctor (Tyler Mane) who's been stalking him for years, Laurie (Scout Taylor-Compton) and Lindsey (Danielle Harris) are taken to a mental institution where they meet Dr. Loomis (Malcolm McDowell), who has written a book about Michael's killing spree. Unfortunately, Michael escapes and heads back to Haddonfield to continue his bloody rampage.

NORA Aunor

SHARON Cuneta

VILMA Santos

Tagalog movies, sports specials

DEC 31 AND NOW ENTERTAINMENT OUTLOOK is a production agreement that puts together Wes Tagalog movies and sports specials together with a musical special and recorded afternoon and evening news programs on Channel 33.

Starting November, "Sine Aksyon" airs Tagalog hardtic movies every Saturday at 7 p.m. Sports shows are featured on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 8 p.m.

A monthly musical variety show called "Sy Pinpinas," to be hosted by Jojo Abejas airs last airdate at 9 p.m.

Back-to-back

"Yes And The City" telenovela in 1001 this November, will all six seasons playing back to back on Wednesdays starting Nov. 4 at 11 p.m.

The HBO original series stars Sarah Jessica Parker as Carrie Bradshaw, a New York City journalist whose observations on relationships and passion appear in a weekly news column, "Sex and the City."

It also stars Samantha (Kim Cattrall), a public relations executive who's sassy and down it all on the single scene; Charlotte (Kristin Davis), a socialite who still believes that love will conquer all; and Miranda (Cynthia Nixon), a cynical corporate lawyer who may just be a pushover when it comes to romance.

Kiddie show

ABS-CBN News and Current Affairs introduces its newest kiddie show "Kidlits," hosted by "Team Buddy" Jed Charles Calleja, 2009 Star Circle Grand Kid Quester Bugoy Carino and his cutest ego, the 3-year-old Kitty Cataliu.

The three will be hanging out in a playhouse where they will learn different lessons every week from basic reading and numbers to new songs and dances as well as good values.

"Kidlits" airs Saturdays at 9:45 a.m. before "Showtime."

ELEY Castillo, Charlie Cohen and Bugoy Carino in the new kiddie show "Kidlits"

Asian version

"The Biggest Loser Asia," the first Asian version of hit US series where overweight contestants are equipped with weight loss skills and resources to undergo physical makeovers, debuts on the Hallmark Channel this month.

Contestants compete to lose weight for the cash prize of $1 00,000.

Contestants will be split into two competing teams and trained by fitness gurus Jose Neto Malaysia from and Jenny Garcia from Australia.

The show premieres on Nov. 2 at 9 p.m.

oct28 - nov3
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Noynoy (Ryan) runs a barhopper travel across the Red Light Beerhouse. This is where he sees and eventually falls for bar girl Jewel (Gwen). Although Noynoy is afraid to cross paths with Nicky (Jeffrey), Jewel's pimp, he proceeds to come up with an escape plan to "save" her. A black comedy set in a carnivalesque bar, funny and funny not straightfor.

Ang Beerhouse will entertain you.

mtrcb rating: R-13

MOVIEWORLD

CHEER FACTOR

What scares these stars

LEE ANGE Bra...Kinders. Gives Hedwiss.

Some scary stuff is universal, and some ordinances aren't common.

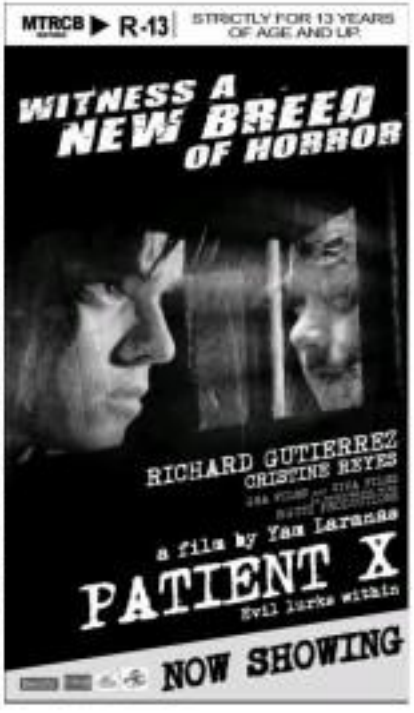
Elijah Wood: "I've always owned by things that are very different from things I've done before—roles and experiences, working with people that I think are incredible."

Donald Sutherland: "Having a gun pointed to my head."

Michael Stuhlbarg: "Mobsite—when people get into a frightened frenzy and ... and the mob inevitably takes over. That can be like a tidal wave, like an earthquake."

Rob Zombie: "Rainbow rainbows. I remember crawling on 42nd Street in New York and all of a sudden, this guy in a tutu with a cute guy right in front of me. It's like, where did that come from?"

Snoop: "When the media asks me crazy questions and I don't know how to answer them."



Mixed reviews for Josh Hartnett starrer shot in RP

LOS ANGELES—THE HOLLYWOOD REporter declared "I Come With the Rain," the Josh Hartnett film partly shot in the Philippines, as a "visually stunning thriller."

The other trade publications, however, panned the movie directed by Mikael Håfström, formerly of Independencia fellow, Misfortune. Shown as a gala presentation selection at the recent Busan International Film Festival, "I Come With the Rain" features Filipino actress Thea Aquino in a cast that includes Elias Koteas, Korean star Lee Byung-hun, Japanese TV idol Kimura Takuya, Shawn Yue, Ryan Bin Ibrahim, Shannon Bernardo, Hamilton Paredes and Ryan Singleton.

Movie Dailyhead reviewers gave also panned as untrue to the film setting and direction by Tom Arah Hung, the Vietnamese filmmaker whose credits include "The Scent of the Green Papaya" (Cannes d'Or in Cannes, 1993) and "Cyclo" (Golden Lion in Venice, 1995).

The Hollywood Reporter's review by Ellen Seth first in very favorable, a complete contrast to the reviews by Variety and Screen International.

Let's begin with the good news—with excerpts from Kerr's review: "A stark opening segment of a vicious beating sets the tone for this noirish thriller about a transplanted ex-cop on a hunt for the missing son of a powerful pharmaceutical mogul. Jumping from Los Angeles to the Philippines and Hong Kong, 'I Come With the Rain' is a moody, supremely stylistic exercise in sweaty underworld revenge that could have easily wowed over into Tarantinoism.

"It never does, thanks largely to director Tom Ahn Hung's restraint [from heavy reediting] and focus on bloody misery and the search for redemption and salvation.

Brutal

"There is a brief aspect to Stairs' and Tom—known for his 'gruesome' characters—promise that he's able to wallow in human depravity with the best of them. The sun [brutally lush brutal—and bloody—violence reminiscent of Oldboy] is permeated with some garish, comic images: wrist bullets aren't traditionally included in foreplay, vagrants aren't normally beaten to death with freshly-shot dogs, shooting victims rarely come back from beyond the grave to Quite like beaders. All these are an arguably don't do properly. It HES to the rest of the film.

"'Rain' is a textbook example of a film that will live or die on the strength of its cast. As a cop that identifies a little too strongly with his quarry, Hartnett is with Hitmen in being cast against type. He acquits himself reasonably well, however Kimura (2046) is at his best when doing the mentally heroic thing on television. When he tries to act, as he does here, it can backfire on him, but he does manage a quiet intensity as the perennial lamb trying to work his or others lungs.

"Though nearly two hours long, 'Rain' never really drags, and Thai scrutinizer manages to keep his religious imagery from dipping into pretentiousness. It may not be the saddest of films from 2009, but it's certainly one of the most aggressively nonsense."

LIE ACTOR Josh Hartnett bids reporters goodbye as he leaves Manila. "I Come With the Rain" was filmed in Mount Pinatubo, Camp Aguinaldo and Malay in Mindanao.

PHOTO COURTESY OF

Variety's Derek Elley wrote: "Shot over years ago, largely in the Philippines and Hong Kong, and finally processed to Japan last summer, the Josh Hartnett starrer 'I Come With the Rain' staggers onto the screen looking as bloody and bruised as many of its protags. Frequently laughable and often impenetrably violent drama, centered on an American private investigator on the trail of a smoke gone AWOL in the Far East...

"Pic opens with a sequence of Lt. cop Kline (Hartnett) burning down a rich secretfellow, Hanford (Elias Koteas), that's expanded in memory flashes throughout the movie. Cue to two years later, and the still traumatized Kline, now a PI, is hired by a pharmaceuticals billionaire to find his son, Alston (Kimura), who's disappeared in Mindanao, Philippines.

"In Manila, Kline is told by Vargas (Eusebio Baraldi), an investigator previously hired by the billionaire, that Alston may now be in Hong Kong. Hedading it in Kowloon, Kline looks up cop pal Meng (Shawn Yue) for help.

"Already rich with coincidences, the story line becomes particularly hazy as Alston is drawn living in a grass hut where he performs miracles on terminal souls, bleeding from stigmata on his already dark palm...

"With all its imagery of physical pain, mental scarring and Christ-like suffering and crucifixion, the pic makes for deeply unpleasant viewing, in little considerable point ... Second half is almost impossible to follow logically, and not helped by linguistic nonsen, including Hong Kong thug Sam Lee as a mad evangelist.

"Gods, which creates to the story of Kline and the cursed Hanford, piles on the sick payche-horror to numbing effect. Lee steals the movie as the sadistic fix, though it's a part the Josh Hartnett thespian almost phone in nonchalant. Clean-cut Hartnett deeply looks bemused, and Kimura comes close to humoring."

'Unique, but incoherent'

Darcy Paquet of Screen Daily weighed in with this review: "Something seems to have gone terribly wrong in the making of 'I Come with the Rain,' an undeniably unique but nearly incoherent ... thriller starring Josh Hartnett and a handful of Asian stars. The handsomely produced feature fears ... director Tom Ash Hung looks good, but its story rapidly disintegrates after the second reel.

"The film starts off innocuously enough, setting up its story with obvious strokes and weighted dreams only by some clunky dialogue. But from the time Kline lands in Hong Kong, the plot grows stranger and less coherent with each passing minute. Virtually every character in the film acts in obsessive, unpredictable ways, but the screenplay makes very little effort to provide any motivations for their actions.

"Some the dialogue begins to take a philosophical turn, with those references piling up around Shlan's character and a long flashback sequence devoted to the film Kline's musings on human agony. Some mainstream viewers may be put off by the film's unusually high levels of violence and gore...

"Hartnett plays it his best shot, but his character has lost most of its credibility by the film's conclusion. Lee and Kimura also show flashes of charisma which are ultimately lost to the noise."

Email the columnist at mendoza_JAS@yahoo.com and read his blog, "The Manila Reporter," on http://blogs.inquirer.net/manilareporter.

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

Character Actress back on her feet

ANGEL Lucan is she really buying a shopper for her own exiled equestrian? Me, really?

RUSHES SUNDAY

By the Entertainment staff

CHARACTER ACTRESS—REPHRASE on character—has led quite a colorful life.

She was once thrown out of an old apartment because of cash flow problems. It seemed men and money were her pitfalls. But she has bounced back, and how!

CA was recently spotted shopping to an upscale mall. She is also rumored to be starring now in a new five-star movie. Is she back with Pride Asian Productions?

Pushy mom

Where Carla Henk was a show biz newcomer, his mom saved as his "agent," pushing him to date wealthy, older gentlemen.

Mom would be seen waiting at the door whenever CH was with gay businessmen. Couldn't wait to collect?

Lost duet

The duo MYHR named Artist of the Year at the recent Star Awards for Music (for their latest album, "Now") last night.

A source says singer Karla Bermudez has opted to go solo and guitarist Chin Alcantara is looking for new collaborations.

It was inevitable. Karla has always been, uh, vocal about her wish to have her own album of Broadway show tunes.

Stolen outing

Now, there's video support.

According to a network insider, a video of Leading Lad is spreading like wildfire on the Net.

It's not a sex video. Lil is reportedly shown frolicking in the woods, screaming like a banshee on Top. The video, recorded with a cell phone camera, effortlessly douses Lil out of the closet.

Cat fight

After quarrelling with Upstart Actress, Prima Donna Star is hardening with Intellectual Hunk.

PS is reportedly upset with HH because he prefers to share the screen with younger leading ladies. Can you blame him if he wants to extend his showbiz life by hooking up with mentors?

Still, HH is now regarded as a "sinking ship" in his home network because his latest projects are falling one after the other.

Dazed and confused

Network Exec is dubbed "Hallelujah Backhand" by insiders because, says a spy, she is always raised (dazed) during meetings.

That's because SE is still reeling from a string of mishaps: Deaths of employees and close relatives and the recent storms that affected SE's personal fortunes.

Happy birthdays!

Celebrities getting older this week:

Today: David Foster (a 66), Toni Collette, 37; Bo Bice, 34.

Tomorrow: Kd. Lang is 49; David Schwimmer, 43.

Nov. 3: Roseanne Barr is 57; Kate Capshaw, 56; Adam Ant, 55; Dolph Lundgren, 52.

Nov. 4: Kathy Griffin is 49; Ralph Macchio, 48; Matthew McConaughey, 40.

Nov. 5: Art Garfunkel is 68; Sam Shepard, 66; Bryan Adams, 50; Tilda Swinton, 49; Tatum O'Neal, 46; Kevin Costner, 55.

Nov. 6: Mike Nichols is 78; Judy Holl, 63; Glenn Frey, 61; Arthur Hanket, 59; Thandie Newton, 37.

Nov. 7: Jerri Mitchell is 66. AP

Gore of all trades

Did you know that, at Harvard, Richard Gore—who stars in the forthcoming "Invictus" (about nelson Amelia Earhart) with Hilary Swank—is an accomplished pianist, music writer and humanitarian? A crusader and friend of the Dalai Lama, Gore is also a photographer of note and has published a book, "Objection," a collection of images from 20 years of journeying through India, Nepal, Tanzibet, Tibet, Mongolia and China.

* * *

Top of the tabloids

The top three bits stories in PH tabloid Bandito this week. (And why we are mired, if we are mired.)

+ Vicki Belo pinalipunan ng mamahaling regalo si Hayden Kho. (Uh, what's new?)

+ Kris Aquino pumayag nang magbigay noticy si Kim Chiu. (Sabi ko nanman kasi?)

+ Celebrities libreng manonood ng sine pagdating Lahatan. (Hindi nga?)

+ Marco at Nadine Samonte Inconfirm ng sina. (Hindi kayo?)

+ Kris, ayaw pakasal kay Herbert Bautista. (And we should care because...?)

+ Bashi ni Cristine pinagpyestahan sa showbiz. (Bat here?)

+ Pasay is At Ali de las Alas nag dulang sayers. (Nanonood?)

+ Julia Ququilleren kay Rosanna Roces ang awat pero... Libya, ayun sa...)

+ Pero sa second no relief operations, Angel Locsin hindi ng babaeng. (Bongga!)

+ Gov. Vilma Santos ayaw pagkit sa mukha kaya sa politika. (Good girl; take your time.)

+ Angel Lais Manzanes nag-comeback as ASAP! (May alam kami...)

+ Si Ai Ai delas Bagon at Alwyl Dimmirat? (Possible, ha?)

+ Jomari Yllana at Mahi Berry dinisenyo crow sagutin kahulan? (Ano raw?)

Email accordion@inquirer.com.ph

BRITISH actor Tilda Swinton in Vienna, Oct. 21. She turns 49 on Nov. 5.

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